

SD65 SPFE Legislative Candidate Questionnaire

**Please limit the following questions to a yes or no response.**

1. The Saint Paul Federation of Educators (SPFE) believes parents, educators, community members, and students should be at the center of decision making around educational policy. However, increasingly out of state millionaires with a vested interest in pursuing a corporate education reform agenda have poured money into political races with the goal of removing local voices from discussions about our children’s education.

**a. Will you and your campaign reject contributions and independent expenditures from market-based education reform organizations, and individuals connected with those organizations?**

	Yes	No
Jamael Lundy	x	
Raeisha Williams	x	
Robyn Gulley	x	

2. In an effort to force compliance with a number of abhorrent, hateful policies, the federal government is threatening to withhold funds from our public schools. Additionally, the current state funding for public education is woefully inadequate to meet student needs, and all across the state, public school districts are being forced to make cuts. The lack of adequate funding has resulted in the need for districts across the state to seek funding referenda in the recent election.

**a. Will you endorse, support, and campaign on increasing funding for public education, even if it means increasing taxes on wealthy individuals and corporations?**

	Yes	No
Jamael Lundy	x	
Raeisha Williams	x	
Robyn Gulley	x	

3. Since the first charter school opened in Saint Paul in 1992, there has been a long history of unchecked charter school growth, and lack of fiscal accountability. These actions, combined with a bill-back system that provides minimal oversight have created a situation where our public schools are suffering significant financial loss, placing them at great risk.

**a. Will you call for the state of Minnesota to do a study on the financial impact charter schools have on our public schools?**

	Yes	No
Jamael Lundy	x	
Raeisha Williams	x	
Robyn Gulley	x	

**4. Do you support collective bargaining for public sector unions and will you fight to protect them?**

	Yes	No
Jamael Lundy	x	
Raeisha Williams	x	
Robyn Gulley	x	

**Please limit your response to 150 words or fewer for each part of the questions below.**

An endorsement from SPFE is only given to candidates that show they are a champion for public education. We do not endorse in all races.

*a. **What is the value of public education for you and for the city of Saint Paul?***

**Jamael Lundy:** Public education is the foundation of Saint Paul's economic vitality, racial equity, and civic life. Our schools are where children gain knowledge, stability, and belonging and where families connect to opportunity. Strong SPPS schools anchor neighborhoods, stabilize housing, and prepare the next generation of workers and leaders. I see education as the hub connecting housing stability, youth safety, and workforce development. Investing in educators, classrooms, and student supports is one of the most effective ways to reduce inequality and strengthen our city for the long term.

**Raeisha Williams:** Public education is one of the most important investments we can make in our people and in the future of Saint Paul. As a mother with children in Saint Paul Public Schools, I see firsthand how our schools shape not only academic learning, but confidence, creativity, and opportunity for young people.

Through my campaign's People's Agenda, I believe every child, regardless of zip code, race, or income, deserves access to strong public schools, culturally responsive education, arts and creative learning, and pathways to college, careers, and leadership.

But education does not happen in isolation. Our students succeed when families have stable housing, access to healthcare and mental health support, and safe communities.

Much of my life's work has centered on youth leadership and mentorship, helping young people find their voice and purpose. For Saint Paul, strong public education strengthens our economy, our neighborhoods, and our democracy. When we invest in our schools, we invest in the future of our entire city.

**Robyn Gulley:** I grew up in a working class family- my dad drove for Metro Transit and my mom taught dance. Public education gave me and my siblings opportunities we never would have had otherwise! One of the things that makes St. Paul special in our public school system and offerings. Even beyond education and opportunities for our kids, the public schools are also very valuable and trusted by our community. During the ICE occupation, so many families relied on our schools and PTAs for mutual aid and support. This is because of the trust and relationships that our schools have built with our families. While we have a great system, we are also in need of improvements in many areas, including addressing our achievement gaps, absenteeism and enrollment. We have a lot to build from and I am eager to dive into this work with SPFE.

*b. **What are your direct connections to SPPS, SPFE, and/or public education***

**Jamael Lundy:** Public education is deeply personal in my family and coalition. My spouse is an SPPS graduate, and I am proud to be supported by educators including SPFE member Ishmael Bowie and several SPPS school board members. Earlier in my career I

also served as a law clerk at Education Minnesota, where I gained firsthand exposure to the legal and policy landscape affecting educators, collective bargaining, and student equity. Through these relationships and experiences I remain closely connected to the priorities of SPPS students, families, and educators and committed to advancing policies that strengthen public schools and respect educator voice.

**Raeisha Williams:** My connection to public education is both personal and professional. I am a mother of children who attend , which gives me a daily understanding of the experiences families and students have within our schools. Beyond my role as a parent, much of my work has focused on supporting young people through education, leadership development, and community-based programming. Through , we have created youth leadership opportunities, peer education programs, and media projects that engage students from both Saint Paul and Minneapolis schools in conversations about leadership, safety, and community wellbeing.

I have also collaborated with educators and school communities through youth programs, school partnerships, and classroom engagement, and I value the leadership of teachers represented by .

These experiences have strengthened my commitment to ensuring our educators are supported and our students have the resources they need to succeed.

**Robyn Gulley:** I have four kids in public schools in both the St. Paul and West St. Paul school districts. One child attended Jie Ming Elementary and is now at Highland Park Middle School. We love the experience she had and feel blessed at the options available!

I have had the opportunity to work with SPFE during my time as Education Director at the MN AFL-CIO. I had the great pleasure of helping write curriculum and provide education to SPFE members, during the 2024 contract campaign, on strike strategy, running for office and more. I have walked with SPFE members on the strike line, and am proud to continue working with SPFE members at New Brookwood Labor College where we educate Union members on organizing and campaign strategies, bargaining, legal rights and more. I joined SPFE door knocking to help win approval of the school referendum and am proud of my work with SPFE, Education Minnesota and SEIU 284 to win eligibility for unemployment for school employees.

Finally, I am a longtime adjunct professor of leadership at the UMN and Metro State and am just finishing my dissertation for a Ph.D. in Education at Hamline.

***c. What is your definition of a “public education champion”?***

**Jamael Lundy:** A public education champion is someone who defends and strengthens public schools as a universal public good that serves every child. It means ensuring public education is fully funded, equitably resourced, and accessible in every neighborhood so families are not pushed toward privatized alternatives. A champion values educators as the core of public education by supporting fair pay, strong unions, manageable class sizes, and safe, inclusive learning environments. It also means advancing racial and economic equity within public systems and recognizing that student success depends on stable housing, health care, and family supports. Most importantly, a public education champion protects the integrity of public education by keeping decision making transparent, accountable to communities, and rooted in

the mission of serving all students.

**Raeisha Williams:** A public education champion is someone who consistently stands up for students, educators, and families and recognizes that strong public schools are the foundation of a strong community. A champion understands that public education must be fully funded, accessible, and equitable so that every child, regardless of zip code, race, or family income, has the opportunity to succeed.

A public education champion listens to educators and respects their expertise in the classroom. Teachers and school staff are on the front lines of shaping our future, and their voices should guide policy decisions.

A champion also understands that student success goes beyond academics. It means supporting the whole child by investing in safe schools, mental health resources, arts and enrichment programs, and community partnerships that help students thrive. For me, being a public education champion means advocating for policies that uplift educators, support families, and ensure every student in Saint Paul has the opportunity to learn, grow, and lead.

**Robyn Gulley:** My definition of a “public education champion” would be whatever SPFE and Education Minnesota say a “champion” is. I believe in and will fight for the entire agenda outlined in SPFE’s “Criteria for Endorsement”, and you can count on me to be there with you at the capitol, but also at the bargaining table, on picket lines and in your political campaigns.

*d. Why are you seeking an endorsement from SPFE?*

**Jamael Lundy:** SPFE represents the educators who know Saint Paul’s students best and who fight daily for equitable well resourced public schools. Your endorsement signals trust from those closest to the classroom and commitment to educator voice. I am seeking it because my vision for Saint Paul depends on strong public education, strong unions, and strong partnerships between schools and communities. I want to work alongside SPFE to advance policies that support educators, stabilize students and families, and ensure every child has access to opportunity.

**Raeisha Williams:** I am seeking the endorsement because educators are essential partners in building strong schools and strong communities. Teachers, paraprofessionals, and school staff understand firsthand what students need to succeed, and their voices should be central in shaping education policy.

As a parent with children in, I deeply value the role educators play in nurturing our children’s growth, creativity, and confidence. I want to work alongside educators to ensure that our schools are well-resourced, our classrooms are supported, and our students have access to the opportunities they deserve.

My campaign is rooted in the belief that strong public education strengthens our entire city. I am seeking SPFE’s endorsement because I share your commitment to fully funded public schools, respect for educators, and policies that support students, families, and the professionals who serve them every day.

**Robyn Gulley:** I am running to be a champion for working families and to tackle the

deep issues in our education and healthcare systems. I am a proud Union member and educator myself. I am proud to have earned the endorsement of the MN AFL-CIO and ten other Unions, but I am most passionate about education issues, and want to partner with you to make our public schools the best they can possibly be!

***e. How do you envision working in partnership with SPFE? What does that look like when we disagree?***

**Jamael Lundy:** Partnership means ongoing dialogue, transparency, and shared problem solving before decisions are made. I would meet regularly with SPFE leadership and educators to understand classroom impacts and co develop policy solutions. It also means supporting collective bargaining rights and educator expertise in implementation. When we disagree, I commit to respectful engagement grounded in student and educator well being. I will seek common ground, share data and constraints openly, and remain accountable to educators even when perspectives differ. The goal is durable solutions built with those who do the work every day.

**Raeisha Williams:** I envision working in partnership with the Saint Paul Federation of Educators through consistent communication, mutual respect, and a shared commitment to the success of students in Saint Paul Public Schools. Educators bring essential expertise about what is happening in classrooms every day, and I believe their voices should be included early in conversations about education policy, funding, and student support.

Partnership means creating regular opportunities for dialogue with educators, listening to their experiences, and ensuring their insights inform decisions at the state level. It also means working together to advocate for strong public education funding, safe and supportive learning environments, and resources that help both students and educators succeed.

When we disagree, I believe the path forward is honest conversation and transparency. We may not always land in the same place, but I will always approach those moments with respect, openness, and a shared focus on what is best for students and our schools.

**Robyn Gulley:** Partnership means more than just being a good vote. It means showing up and being available to SPFE members and staff to work on policy and campaigns from the beginning. We have a saying in my union that we don't want someone to bring us a half baked pizza-we want to be there are the beginning to talk about the sauce, crust and toppings BEFORE it gets put in the oven. Partnership at minimum means no half baked pizzas. I'd love to learn more about what partnership expectations there are from SPFE as well.

The rampant growth of [charter schools in the city of Saint Paul](#) has caused great harm to our public schools and to our community. This rise has led to the [resegregation of our public schools](#), and includes a Saint Paul charter school that has been [under investigation since 2019](#) for investment practices.

- a. Saint Paul Public Schools (like many others across the state) recently made the decision to close or combine several schools due to declining enrollment. Out-of-control growth of charter schools has led to the disastrous result of more "seats" available than there are school-age children in cities. Unlike charter schools, public schools must be available to serve all children. What is the role***

***a Representative in supporting our public schools?***

**Jamael Lundy:** A Representative has a duty to protect and strengthen public education as the backbone of our communities. That means ensuring stable, predictable funding for public districts that must serve every child and absorb enrollment shifts, mobility, and higher needs populations. I will advocate for enrollment stabilization funding, facilities support for districts facing closures or consolidations, and policies that prioritize public school sustainability in state decisions about new school authorization. A Representative must also elevate the educator voice in policy and resist structural decisions that undermine public systems. When districts like SPPS face enrollment driven by charter expansion, the state must act to prevent destabilization of public schools that remain the guaranteed provider for all students.

**Raeisha Williams:** The role of a Representative is to protect and strengthen public education so that neighborhood schools remain stable, well-funded, and accessible to every child. In cities like Saint Paul, declining enrollment and the rapid expansion of charter schools have created more school seats than students, which puts enormous pressure on traditional public schools like those in Saint Paul Public Schools.

A Representative must ensure that state policy prioritizes the long-term health of public education. That means advocating for sustainable funding formulas, supporting transparency and accountability across all publicly funded schools, and ensuring that policy decisions do not undermine the stability of public school districts. Public schools serve every child who walks through their doors, including students with the greatest needs. Lawmakers have a responsibility to protect that mission.

As a legislator, I would work closely with educators, families, and partners like the Saint Paul Federation of Educators to ensure public schools remain the cornerstone of our communities.

**Robyn Gulley:** Support means supporting the funding and policies that matter most to our educators and students. I agree with your analysis of the charter school problem and support both a moratorium on new charter schools as well as increased regulation of the schools that exist, some of which probably should not be allowed to exist. I would love to partner on this issue and to find ways to meet student needs within the public system.

***b. Minnesota's public schools provide more than classroom education for students and families. Robust, well-funded public schools help to create stable communities, increased property values, and play a vital role in desegregating our city. What specific steps will you take to slow charter school growth AND support enrollment in our public schools?***

**Jamael Lundy:** Robust public schools are essential to stable, integrated neighborhoods and Saint Paul's long term prosperity. The unchecked expansion of charter schools in urban districts has fragmented enrollment and strained the public system that must serve every child. I support stronger state scrutiny of new charter approvals in already saturated areas, with clear consideration of district impact and community need. Public funding and policy should first sustain and strengthen SPPS schools that anchor neighborhoods and provide universal access. I will advocate for reinvestment in district facilities, community school models, and high quality academic and cultural programming that keeps families in public schools. We must also ensure state policy does not incentivize parallel systems that undermine district viability. The priority must be a strong, well resourced public system at the center of Saint Paul's education landscape.

**Raeisha Williams:** To strengthen public education, we must ensure that policy decisions prioritize the long-term stability of neighborhood public schools like those in Saint Paul Public Schools. As a legislator, I would support stronger oversight and accountability for charter school authorization to ensure that new schools are only approved when there is a clear community need and when they do not destabilize existing public schools.

We must also address funding policies that unintentionally incentivize the over-expansion of charter schools. I would support reviewing state authorization practices and enrollment impacts to slow unchecked growth. At the same time, we must actively strengthen public schools by investing in smaller class sizes, arts and enrichment programs, culturally responsive education, and wraparound services that support families.

Working in partnership with educators and organizations like Saint Paul Federation of Educators, we can ensure that strong, well-funded public schools remain the heart of vibrant, stable communities in Saint Paul.

**Robyn Gulley:** Supporting the moratorium on new charter schools and increasing regulatory oversight are top priorities for me. As for supporting enrollment in our public schools, I am a parent who used open enrollment to send a child to SPPS even though our house is just outside the district in West St. Paul. Having great schools and great options helps, but we could also use help with marketing our great schools, especially in some immigrant communities that have been looking to charter schools for their kids. I'd love to partner with you on both fronts.

***c. Will you advocate and support a comprehensive study on the impact of charters schools in our communities (including segregation, tax base, land use, and neighborhood impact) and take steps to address the harms done by unchecked charter school growth, including the financial costs that districts face due to Special Education and English Learner bill-backs to the home district? Who would you partner with for this study? Who would you include as stakeholders?***

**Jamael Lundy:** Yes. Minnesota needs an independent statewide study of charter school impacts on segregation, district finance, land use, tax base, and neighborhood stability, including special education and English learner bill-backs. I would seek a legislative mandate directing MDE to commission the study in partnership with Minnesota State or the University of Minnesota. Stakeholders must include SPPS and other districts, SPFE and Education Minnesota, charter authorizers, parents, civil rights and disability advocates, municipal planners, housing experts, and fiscal analysts. The goal is an evidence-based framework for responsible authorization policy that prevents harm to public districts while ensuring all students are served equitably.

**Raeisha Williams:** Yes. I support a comprehensive, statewide study on the impact of charter school growth on our communities. Policymakers need clear data on how charter expansion affects segregation, district finances, land use, neighborhood stability, and the financial burden created when districts like Saint Paul Public Schools are billed for Special Education and English Learner services.

As a legislator, I would advocate for the Minnesota Legislature to commission an independent study in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Education and research institutions such as the University of Minnesota.

Stakeholders must include educators and representatives from the Saint Paul Federation of Educators, school district leaders, parents, students, community organizations, and local government partners. The goal should be transparency and accountability so that state policy protects strong public schools, ensures fair funding, and supports stable neighborhoods while addressing the unintended consequences of unchecked charter expansion.

**Robyn Gulley:** Yes, I would support a study but personally I don't think a study would change my mind and concerns about charter schools or my support for a moratorium. If it helps build support for reigning in the charters though, I am all for it!

**d. According to a series of articles from the [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#), many Minnesota Charter Schools fail to meet standards that public schools are held to, especially around financial management. Many charter authorizers are unaware of school practices. What steps will you take to ensure that charter schools are held to the same expectations as public schools?**

**Jamael Lundy:** Public dollars should come with clear public accountability. I support strengthening transparency and outcomes based performance expectations across all publicly funded schools. That starts with ensuring charter authorizers provide consistent, accessible reporting on academic outcomes, financial health, enrollment practices, and student services, comparable to what districts report. The state should have clear visibility into authorizer oversight practices and the performance of schools they sponsor. I also support aligning expectations around student access, discipline fairness, and service to higher need students so comparisons with district schools are meaningful

**Raeisha Williams;** Charter schools that receive public funding must meet the same standards of accountability, transparency, and student support as traditional public schools. Families and communities deserve assurance that every publicly funded school is operating with integrity and serving students equitably.

As a legislator, I would support strengthening oversight of charter authorizers through clearer accountability requirements, regular performance reviews, and stronger reporting standards through the Minnesota Department of Education. Authorizers should be required to demonstrate that they are actively monitoring academic performance, financial management, enrollment practices, and student support services.

I would also support policies that ensure charter schools follow the same expectations around special education services, English learner support, discipline transparency, and equitable access that districts such as Saint Paul Public Schools must meet.

Public education funding should come with public accountability. Our goal should always be to ensure that every student, regardless of the school they attend, receives a high-quality, equitable education.

**Robyn Gulley:** I would support legislation to ensure they are required to meet the same high standards as public schools. Absolutely.

At SPFE, we believe diversity, equity, and inclusion are a net-positive for our city. The current federal administration has used threats of arrest, deportation, and defunding to force compliance with abhorrent and hateful policies.

- a. Minnesota has a vibrant immigrant community. Recently there have been several instances where individuals who have committed no crime, and are in the US legally are being forcibly removed and are now facing deportation. This is often done while being masked, with no visible identification, and with body camera's either missing or turned off. What steps will you take to limit the ability of ICE and the Border Patrol to attack our community? How will you, as a legislator make certain that all law enforcement (including ICE and Border Patrol) can be identified?***

**Jamael Lundy:** As a legislator, I will use Minnesota's lawful authority to protect residents, increase transparency, and hold federal actors accountable when they violate the law. I will fight to increase funding for the Attorney General's Office so Minnesota can rapidly challenge unlawful removals, defend due process, and protect the education, health care, and public safety systems our communities rely on. I will also advance real time transparency on federal enforcement activity through a state operated BCA portal that allows verified public space reporting, paired with know your rights information and strict guardrails that prohibit interference or disclosure of private addresses.

I support passage of a mask ban bill so that any law enforcement operating in Minnesota, including federal agents, cannot conceal their identity while exercising authority over residents. In addition, I will back a dedicated accountability partnership between the Attorney General and county attorneys to investigate and prosecute violations of Minnesota law by individual agents, and I support pursuing a federal consent decree establishing court supervised standards for federal enforcement conduct in our state.

**Raeisha Williams:** Minnesota's strength comes from its diverse communities, including immigrant and refugee families who contribute to the cultural, economic, and civic life of our state. As a legislator, I believe our responsibility is to ensure that everyone in our communities is treated with dignity, transparency, and respect under the law.

I support clear policies that require accountability and identification for any law enforcement operating in our communities, including agents from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and U.S. Border Patrol. No officer operating in Minnesota should be masked, unidentified, or operating without visible credentials and body cameras.

I would advocate for stronger state guidelines limiting cooperation with federal immigration enforcement when it threatens community trust or safety, and ensure that local resources are not used to target residents who have committed no crime. My work in community safety has always centered on building trust. Public safety works best when communities feel protected, not afraid.

**Robyn Gulley:** I will support or author legislation to ban masks and require visible badges for all federal agents and to allow for civil, private right of action by citizens to sue and hold civilly liable federal agents who violate our laws or the constitution. That being said, I am mindful that ICE and Border Patrol agents are willfully ignoring the constitution so I think the impact of such laws may be limited (assuming they may continue to violate our state laws

with impunity as well). As a result, you can count on me to help organize rallies, press conferences and events to call out the lawless behavior. We must meet such behavior with organized people in the streets.

***b. Attacks on the trans community and gender affirming care have increased, placing people in a potentially life-threatening predicament. What should Minnesota legislators do to protect the LGBTQIA+ community, particularly our youth?***

**Jamael Lundy:** Minnesota must treat 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion as a core civil rights obligation of state government. I support strengthening nondiscrimination protections across housing, education, employment, and health care so sexual orientation and gender identity never limit access to opportunity or safety. That includes defending and expanding access to gender affirming care for youth and adults, protecting providers and families from out of state interference, and ensuring Medicaid and private coverage include medically necessary affirming services.

For youth, schools must be safe and affirming environments. I support policies that require inclusive curricula, anti bullying enforcement, and access to supportive counseling and student services. We also need targeted investments to address disparities in homelessness, mental health, and family rejection that disproportionately affect LGBTQIA+ youth. Minnesota should collect better data to guide interventions and partner with community organizations delivering culturally competent support. Protecting LGBTQIA+ Minnesotans means building systems where every young person can live, learn, and receive care without fear.

**Raeisha Williams:** Minnesota has a responsibility to ensure that every person, especially our young people, can live safely, authentically, and with dignity. As legislators, we must protect the rights, safety, and wellbeing of LGBTQIA+ residents and ensure that youth have access to supportive environments at home, in school, and in their communities.

This includes protecting access to medically appropriate care, including gender-affirming care recommended by licensed medical professionals, and ensuring that healthcare decisions remain between patients, families, and their doctors. Legislators should also strengthen anti-discrimination protections in schools, healthcare, housing, and employment.

We must also ensure that schools remain safe spaces where LGBTQIA+ students are respected and protected from bullying and harassment. Supporting inclusive policies, mental health resources, and affirming school environments helps young people thrive.

Ultimately, protecting LGBTQIA+ youth means standing firmly for dignity, safety, and equal rights for all Minnesotans.

**Robyn Gulley:** I fully support maintaining “gender identity” as a protected class in our state, support the right of all kids in our schools to play sports and to have access to bathrooms based on their gender identity. We must use our state tax dollars to support schools and healthcare facilities when their federal funding is threatened and I support passing a trigger law that would require use of our state’s reserves / rainy day funds to snap into place and backfill any threatened or actual federal cuts. We also need sufficient state funding to help resurrect the now closed “Rainbow Health” to ensure all

trans kids in our community have adequate access to their specific healthcare needs. Finally, I want to recognize our state for being a sanctuary where many families have moved here from Iowa and surrounding states where political leaders are oppressing the trans/LGBTQIA community. But because so many have moved here, we need to grow our health services to meet the growing needs of this community and shorten the wait times for patients to get the care they need and rely on.

***c. Other states have been targeted for their progressive stance, and their unwillingness to comply in advance. What have you learned from watching these struggles? How can Minnesota build relationships with other states with shared values?***

**Jamael Lundy:** Other states have faced federal pressure for protecting immigrant communities, inclusive education, and access to care. What we have learned is that states are strongest when they act together rather than alone. Coordinated Attorney General litigation, shared policy frameworks, and unified education and health strategies have helped states defend federal funding and protect public institutions when federal leadership is unreliable.

Minnesota should deepen relationships with states that share our commitment to strong public education and civil rights. That includes multistate legal strategies to defend federal education funding, shared research and guidance networks so schools and educators continue to receive evidence based support, and coordinated protections for inclusive curricula and student well being. Interstate compacts are one practical tool in this work. They allow states to align standards, pool expertise, and present a unified front in defending public systems that serve all students.

For educators and unions, this kind of cooperation ensures that public schools remain stable, inclusive, and well supported across state lines, and that no state is isolated when federal policy threatens students, families, or classrooms.

**Raeisha Williams:** Watching other states navigate challenges to their progressive policies has shown that strong values must be paired with preparation, collaboration, and clear communication with the public. States that stand firm in protecting civil rights, public education, healthcare access, and worker protections often face political and legal pressure, but they also demonstrate the importance of building broad coalitions that support those values.

One lesson is that states are stronger when they work together. Minnesota can build partnerships with other states that share our commitment to equity, civil rights, and strong public institutions. This can include multi-state policy collaborations, joint legal strategies to defend state authority, and sharing best practices on issues like education, healthcare, and environmental protection.

Regional alliances between legislatures, attorneys general, and governors can also strengthen our collective ability to respond to federal or political challenges. By building relationships with states that share our values, Minnesota can help lead a network of states committed to protecting people, strengthening communities, and advancing policies that create opportunity for everyone.

**Robyn Gulley:** I have used my leadership role at the UMN to push for a collective strategy in higher education to push back on the federal attacks on DEI and free speech rights of students (especially students active in protest activities around the war in Gaza). This has had mixed success, but we have a long way to go to be successful. I think we need to continue pushing for collective strategies of resistance and also, I believe, we will need a collection of states to pass a “Bent Knee” tax on corporations that did bend the knee to Trump. These taxes could provide the funds needed to rebuild communities like ours and provide reparations to the immigrant families and families of color targeted by racial profiling. Whether or not such taxes pass, talk of them will hopefully deter the business community from acquiescing so spectacularly in the future.

Saint Paul, like many cities, is struggling to balance the needs of community against increasingly tight budgets. The solution has often been to raise property taxes and fees. While Minnesota residents are often willing to take on the additional financial burden to care for their city, many are at the financial breaking point, this system is ultimately unsustainable, and has the most damaging financial impact on our citizens that can least afford it.

**a. *Wealthy corporations saw some of their largest profits during the pandemic, while our residents struggled financially. Will you support the use of PILOTs (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) to ease the tax burden on residents? Will you support a percentage of a PILOTs to be dedicated to funding public education? What steps will you take to pursue PILOTs?***

**Jamael Lundy:** Yes. Saint Paul carries unique structural costs as Minnesota’s capital city and regional nonprofit hub, with a large share of state, federal, and institutional property that is tax exempt yet requires full city services. That imbalance shifts property tax pressure onto residents and local businesses. I support expanding and formalizing PILOT agreements so major tax exempt institutions and high value corporate properties contribute fairly to the infrastructure and public services they rely on. I also support dedicating a meaningful share of PILOT revenue to public education, recognizing that Saint Paul Public Schools educate the workforce and community that these institutions depend on. As a legislator, I will partner with the city, schools, and institutional stakeholders to create enabling state policy, incentives, and transparency frameworks that make PILOT participation consistent, predictable, and tied to community benefit, including education funding.

**Raeisha Williams:** Yes. I support exploring and implementing Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs) as one tool to ensure that large institutions and highly profitable corporations contribute fairly to the communities where they operate. During the pandemic, many residents struggled with rising costs while some corporations experienced record profits. Our tax system should reflect fairness and shared responsibility.

PILOT agreements can help ease the tax burden on residents while ensuring that organizations benefiting from public infrastructure and services contribute to the community. I would support dedicating a meaningful portion of PILOT revenue to strengthening public education, including schools in Saint Paul Public Schools.

As a legislator, I would work with local governments, school districts, community leaders, and the legislature to establish clear state guidelines that encourage PILOT agreements where

appropriate. I would also support transparency and public accountability so communities understand how funds are generated and invested to support schools, services, and neighborhood stability.

**Robyn Gulley:** Yes I support the use of PILOTs but am aware that courts have struck these down in the past in St. Paul. We may be able to get something passed by targeting non-profit executives in our state who make more than the Governor, for example, by levying a 300% excise tax on the income, that would be paid by the non-profit itself. For example- HealthPartners is the largest employer in St. Paul and it pays no tax, while paying more than \$3 million a year to its CEO. The excessive salary tax would both create a disincentive for the rampant growth of inequality and allow us to collect money for the public good. More than 150 non-profit healthcare executives in Minnesota make more than a million per year. I would absolutely support directing some or all of this to public education or local government aid.

***b. In 2022, voters in Massachusetts passed the Fair Share Amendment, which established a 4% tax on the portion of a tax payers income over \$1 million, and constitutionally dedicated this money to public education and transportation. The resulted in \$2.4 billion in revenue in the first year, and just under \$3 billion in the second year. Would you support a similar Millionaire's Tax in Minnesota? What other steps will you take to ensure that the wealthiest Minnesotan's are paying their fair share?***

**Jamael Lundy:** Yes. I support a Minnesota version of a high income surcharge that dedicates new revenue to public education and transportation, similar in concept to Massachusetts' Fair Share approach. Our tax system should ask the most from those with the greatest capacity to contribute. I also support closing inequitable tax loopholes that primarily benefit the ultra wealthy, including preferential treatment for private jet fuel and luxury stadium seating, and ensuring emerging high profit sectors contribute fairly. For example, I have proposed targeted taxation of large data center developments that consume significant land and energy while often receiving substantial incentives. These steps together move Minnesota toward a fairer tax structure that stabilizes school funding, reduces pressure on property taxes, and ensures prosperity is shared.

**Raeisha Williams:** Yes, I would support exploring a Millionaire's Tax in Minnesota similar to the Fair Share Amendment. When wealth grows dramatically at the very top while many families struggle with housing costs, childcare, and education expenses, it is reasonable to ask the wealthiest residents to contribute a little more to the systems that make our communities strong.

Revenue generated from a surcharge on income over \$1 million could be dedicated to strengthening public education, transportation, and other critical infrastructure that benefits everyone.

Beyond a millionaire's tax, I would support closing tax loopholes that allow large corporations and high-income earners to avoid paying their fair share. I also believe in improving transparency in the tax code and ensuring that tax policy prioritizes working families.

A fair tax system should reduce the burden on everyday residents while ensuring that those who have benefited most from our economy reinvest in Minnesota's future.

**Robyn Gulley:** Absolutely. And as mentioned above I support capping salaries to non-profit executives (or applying an excise tax on the non-profits that pay. I believe income inequality is one of the biggest problems of our time. I also support a wealth tax that would apply to wealth, not just income. That would also probably require an amendment to the constitution but I would support building a robust coalition to pass it.

Gun violence is at epidemic levels. The various lock down drills that our students are subjected to do little to address the problem of access to guns, particularly assault weapons. Students, parents, and staff are experiencing life-long trauma from exposure to school shootings, and nothing is being done to actually make people safer.

**a. How will you prioritize real gun safety as a legislator? What specific steps will you take to ban assault weapons in our state?**

**Jamael Lundy:** Real gun safety means reducing shootings and the harm they cause while focusing on prevention, accountability, and community stability rather than fear driven policy. I bring deep experience to this work. I served as Committee Administrator for the Minnesota House Public Safety and Criminal Justice Reform Committee, where I helped advance major safety and justice reforms, and I currently represent the Hennepin County Attorney's Office at the Legislature, where I have consistently advocated for gun violence prevention policies alongside prosecutors, law enforcement, and community partners.

As a legislator, I will make violence prevention funding permanent so community interruption teams, co response models with mental health professionals, and locally driven prevention programs have stable support. I will expand Group Violence Intervention, which Ramsey County and Hennepin County leaders have shown can reduce shootings by focusing outreach and accountability on the small number of people at highest risk. I also support a long term transition to smart gun sales standards to prevent stolen weapons and accidental shootings.

To ban assault weapons, I will lead passage of a comprehensive weapons of war package including an Assault Weapons Ban, High Capacity Magazine Ban, and reinstatement of Minnesota's Binary Trigger Ban. These devices are designed to maximize casualties in seconds and have no place in our communities, schools, or public spaces. My approach pairs lethality reduction with prevention investments so Minnesota addresses both the tools of mass harm and the conditions that allow violence to spread.

**Raeisha Williams:** Real gun safety requires both strong policy and real investment in prevention. My approach comes directly from the work we have been doing through Guns Down Love Up, where we focus on prevention, youth leadership, and community healing.

For years, I have worked with young people, families, and community leaders to address gun violence before it happens, through youth councils, community conversations, violence interruption, and restorative justice work. That experience has shown me that we must address both access to dangerous weapons and the root causes of violence.

As a legislator, I will advocate for stronger gun safety laws, including banning assault-style weapons designed for mass harm, expanding background checks, and enforcing safe storage

requirements. At the same time, we must fund community-based prevention programs that engage youth, reduce conflict, and create pathways for leadership and opportunity.

Real safety comes when we combine responsible laws with community solutions that stop violence before it starts.

**Robyn Gulley:** I am an active supporter of Moms Demand Action and helped pass a resolution by the city of West St Paul calling on our state to pass such legislation. I will absolutely support, author, work toward common sense gun control, including an assault weapons ban and to do my part in making sure that we elect judges who will uphold the constitution as it's written in the 2nd amendment and not what the NRA says.

In 2018, SPFE joined our institutional partners in calling for elected officials to engage in co-governance and people-centered democracy. As a practice, this means engaging with your partners in all areas of public work, a willingness to be held accountable to promises, and on-going, open communication.

***a. What do the terms co-governance and people-centered democracy mean to you?***

**Jamael Lundy:** Co-governance and people-centered democracy mean that those most affected by public decisions help shape them from the beginning, not just react at the end. It is shared problem solving with educators, students, families, workers, and community leaders as partners in policy design, implementation, and evaluation. It requires transparency, humility, and a willingness to be held accountable to commitments. In practice, it means bringing front-line expertise and lived experience into legislative work so policy reflects real conditions in classrooms and communities. For me, co-governance is how we build durable, equitable public systems that people trust because they helped create them.

**Raeisha Williams:** To me, co-governance and people-centered democracy mean that the people most impacted by policies should have a real voice in shaping them. Governance should not happen only in government buildings, it should happen in partnership with communities.

A people-centered democracy listens to residents, respects lived experience, and invites community members, workers, parents, and young people into the decision-making process. Co-governance means sharing power by engaging communities in meaningful ways so that policies reflect real needs and real solutions.

In my work and leadership, I have always believed that strong communities are built when people are not just consulted, but truly included. When communities help shape decisions, we build policies that are more equitable, more effective, and more trusted by the people they serve.

**Robyn Gulley:** I was part of the 2018 effort to push for co-governance and people centered democracy within my own Union, SEIU and I remain committed to both. The terms refer to how we do politics: first we strategize together, plan and research a shared agenda, then we campaign together and then we work together to govern and pass our shared agenda. We do it together all the way through and as a senator I will not consider myself or my own opinions to be better than partners like SPFE by virtue of having an

election certificate. I am enthusiastic about this as the right way to do politics!

***b. What groups and individuals will you look to for guidance (please be as specific as possible?).***

**Jamael Lundy:** I rely on a broad circle of practitioners and community leaders. Rep. Cedrick Frazier has been a mentor on public safety and legislative leadership. Paul Winkelaar at Education Minnesota and SPFE educator Ishmael Bowie provide direct educator and union perspectives. Councilmember Anika Bowie grounds me in Saint Paul community needs and municipal impacts. Charlie St. Dennis is someone I look to for a student's perspective. Mary Moriarty offers prosecutorial and legal system insight. Justin Terrell of the Minnesota Justice Research Center informs justice reform strategy. Ethan Vogel of AFSCME and Carlo Franco bring front-line labor perspectives. Connor McNutt provides campaign and constituent engagement insight. Adosh Unni and Safia Khan help me understand executive branch context. These voices and many others ensure my decisions reflect educators, workers, families, and public systems.

**Raeisha Williams:** I will look to the people most directly impacted by policy decisions. That includes educators and leaders from Saint Paul Federation of Educators, families and administrators within Saint Paul Public Schools, community leaders, youth voices, and grassroots organizations working on housing, public safety, and economic opportunity.

I will also seek guidance from organizations doing on-the-ground work such as Guns Down Love Up, neighborhood groups in Frogtown and Rondo, small business owners, labor unions, and local advocates working on environmental justice, immigrant rights, and healthcare access.

Most importantly, I will continue listening directly to residents of Senate District 65 through community meetings, town halls, and one-on-one conversations to ensure their experiences and priorities guide my work as a legislator.

**Robyn Gulley:** I am first and foremost a labor person. I look to the Unions, their leaders and members who are on the front lines of any situation to learn what things are really like, to learn what ideas are bad (many are) and which will actually help. I want to start always with those doing the work and then get the opinions of other "experts". Senator Erin Murphy is a mentor of mine and I am blessed to be in community with a whole host of community organizations like Unidos, Take Action MN, Faith in Minnesota and more.

***c. What steps will you take to make sure decisions are made with communities, instead of for communities?***

**Jamael Lundy:** I will institutionalize partnership rather than rely on ad hoc consultation. That includes regular stakeholder roundtables before bill drafting, community review periods on major proposals, and ongoing advisory relationships with educators, unions, parents, and students. I will share policy goals early, invite co-design input, and report back on how feedback shaped outcomes. I also support participatory processes such as community forums and coalition briefings so decisions reflect lived experience and front-line knowledge. The goal is shared ownership of policy, not one-way outreach.

**Raeisha Williams:** I will prioritize consistent, direct engagement with the people most impacted by policy decisions. That means hosting regular community conversations, town halls, and listening sessions so residents can share their experiences and help shape solutions.

I will work closely with educators and leaders from Saint Paul Federation of Educators, families connected to Saint Paul Public Schools, youth leaders, neighborhood organizations, and grassroots groups across District 65.

I also believe in bringing community voices into the policy process early, before decisions are made, so that legislation reflects real needs and lived experiences. My goal is to create transparent, accessible pathways for residents to participate in decision-making, ensuring policies are developed with communities, not simply for them.

**Robyn Gulley:** I have spent a lot of time with the disability rights community from my work with the SEIU Homecare Workers Union. They have a slogan that says, “nothing about us without us”. I plan not only to have this slogan posted on my office wall but to live by it. I will also not agree to any policy creation process that prevents me from being in dialogue with community partners.

***d. How will you seek out educator and student voice in your decision-making process? What steps will you take to invite SPFE in as a stakeholder? How will you share information with SPFE, parents and students?***

**Jamael Lundy:** I will maintain direct, routine engagement with SPFE leadership and members through scheduled meetings, school visits, and educator roundtables. I will also seek student voice through youth organizations and school-based listening sessions. SPFE will be invited into policy development early, not after positions are formed. I will share information transparently through briefings, written updates, and open communication channels so educators and families can track proposals and provide input. My commitment is ongoing dialogue, not episodic contact.

**Raeisha Williams:** I will intentionally create regular opportunities to hear directly from educators and students. That includes hosting listening sessions with teachers and school staff from , meeting with student leaders, and visiting classrooms within to understand what is happening on the ground.

I will invite SPFE to serve as an ongoing stakeholder by maintaining open communication, consulting them early on education policy, and ensuring their expertise informs legislative decisions.

I will also prioritize transparency by sharing updates through community meetings, newsletters, and direct engagement with parents, students, and educators so that people understand what policies are being considered and have opportunities to provide feedback.

**Robyn Gulley:** I am open to creating a plan and process with SPFE on what this can and should like for our partnership. I want to do this work together and not isolation so I look forward to thinking this through with you to ensure the process is productive and mutually beneficial.

**e. How will you separate your accountability to the public good and your personal feelings?**

**Jamael Lundy:** Public office requires disciplined judgment grounded in evidence, equity, and community impact rather than personal preference. I rely on data, stakeholder input, and professional expertise to evaluate policy choices. When perspectives differ, I focus on shared outcomes such as student well-being, educator support, and public system strength. My accountability is to the public interest and the commitments I make to communities and partners. Maintaining that distinction is part of ethical leadership and essential to trust in co-governance.

**Raeisha Williams:** Public leadership requires humility, integrity, and a commitment to serve the broader community. While personal experiences shape my perspective, my responsibility as a legislator is to make decisions grounded in fairness, evidence, and what best serves the public good.

I will listen carefully to diverse voices, including community members, educators, advocates, and policy experts, and evaluate decisions based on their impact on the people of the district. Transparency, open dialogue, and accountability will guide my approach.

Ultimately, my role is not to center my personal feelings, but to ensure that policies reflect the needs, values, and wellbeing of the communities I serve.

**Robyn Gulley:** I am blessed to come from the movement side of politics- so I come to this work with deep convictions and relationships. That being said, I don't think I should make decisions without the advice and input from as many stakeholders as possible. I am very comfortable voting my conscience even against immense pressure (see my track record at the UMN Board of Regents as an example).

Because I have experience and confidence working in coalition and from deep values, I am confident there will be few examples where my personal feelings and votes or statements on the public good will be in conflict.

Every current AND future student of SPPS will live in a world irreparably impacted by climate change. Students are experiencing extreme heat, worsening food insecurity, poor air quality, extreme weather events and other impacts which ALL directly impact their ability to learn. Aggressive leadership is needed NOW to limit those impacts as much as possible and to help prepare our communities and students how to best adapt to our future planet.

- a. What specific things will you do on a micro and macro level to address the issue of climate change for our students of the present and the future? How can our public schools become leaders in our communities addressing climate change? How will you include students and educators in addressing the impacts of climate change that are impacting our public schools?**

**Jamael Lundy:** Addressing climate change for students requires both immediate school level action and long term structural policy, guided by an environmental justice lens. Climate impacts in Saint Paul already fall hardest on neighborhoods like Rondo, Frogtown, and the West Side,

where students face higher heat, air pollution, and environmental health risks. Our response must center those realities.

On a micro level, I will support investments that make schools healthier and more resilient places for students now. That includes improving indoor air quality, cooling and green schoolyards, lead and pollution remediation, and safe routes to school through clean transit and green infrastructure. I support policies like a statewide non biodegradable plastic bag tax to reduce pollution burdens that affect school communities and student health. Schools should also have resources to integrate climate literacy, student projects, and career pathways in sustainability so students see themselves as climate problem solvers.

On a macro level, I will advance environmental policy as racial justice policy so state permitting, transportation, housing, and infrastructure decisions reduce cumulative pollution in communities where many SPPS students live. Public schools can be leaders by serving as community climate hubs with solar installations, green stormwater projects, and shared cooling or clean air spaces during extreme weather. I will partner with educators and students through school visits, youth advisory input, and collaboration with SPFE to ensure climate policy reflects classroom realities and student experience.

**Raeisha Williams:** On a macro level, I will fight policies that protect Minnesota's water and air from harmful industrial development. That means opposing copper-sulfide mining projects that threaten our watersheds, because studies show hardrock mining often leads to long-term water contamination in nearby rivers and groundwater. I also support stronger regulation, or a moratorium, on large data centers that can consume millions of gallons of water each day for cooling and place heavy pressure on local aquifers.

On a micro level, I will work with local schools and neighborhoods to address environmental justice issues like the pollution from the St. Paul Brass Foundry in Frogtown, which has faced violations related to air pollution and particulate emissions near homes and a childcare center.

Our schools can lead by engaging students and educators in environmental monitoring, climate curriculum, and community advocacy, empowering young people to protect the water, air, and neighborhoods they call home.

**Robyn Gulley:** I agree that this issue is of great and existential concern for our planet. My brother-in-law is one of the premier scientists on glaciers, climate change and someone I rely on very much in this work. Aurora Vautrin from the 100% campaign is part of my campaign team as well. I do believe that a special bonding bill to help us build out solar power for buildings in the MUSH sector (Municipal, University, Schools and Hospitals) and to reduce our carbon footprint would tremendously help. The MUSH sector is the source of 24% of our carbon footprint and an area public investment would have multiple positive impacts, especially as the solar power could reduce energy costs for our public buildings and possibly even raise money to the degree that the solar energy generated was able to be sold back to the energy grid. I would love to hear SPFE's ideas on this as well.

**What specific steps will you take to protect the right of workers – especially public sector workers – to bargain collectively? How will you encourage workers to be part of a union, should they choose to?**

**Jamael Lundy:** Protecting collective bargaining rights is essential to strong public services and stable communities. I will defend and strengthen Minnesota's Public Employment Labor Relations Act so public sector workers, including educators, retain full rights to organize, bargain, and resolve disputes without political interference. I oppose any effort to weaken exclusive representation, payroll deduction, or fair share structures that sustain union capacity. I will also support maintaining strong prevailing wage, project labor, and labor peace standards in public funding and procurement so public dollars reinforce collective bargaining rather than undermine it.

To encourage union membership, I support policies that ensure workers have meaningful access to union orientation, workplace communication, and information about their rights and benefits. Workers should hear directly from their unions, not just employers. I will also continue partnering with labor organizations like SPFE, Education Minnesota, and AFSCME so policy decisions reflect front line worker expertise. Strong unions improve wages, retention, and service quality in public education and across government.

**Raeisha Williams:** I believe strong unions are essential to protecting workers, strengthening families, and building stable communities. As a legislator, I will support policies that protect and expand the right of workers, especially public sector workers, to organize and bargain collectively without intimidation or interference.

I will work closely with labor organizations such as Saint Paul Federation of Educators to ensure that collective bargaining rights remain strong and that educators and public employees have a real voice in their working conditions. I also support policies that make it easier for workers to form unions, including protecting organizing rights, preventing union-busting practices, and ensuring fair labor standards.

Encouraging union membership starts with protecting workers' freedom to organize and ensuring they understand the benefits of collective bargaining, fair wages, safe workplaces, and a stronger voice on the job.

**Robyn Gulley:** I helped to lead the recent coalition effort to update the Public Employee Labor Relations Act in 2024. There are additional updates we can do to help make organizing easier and to strengthen unions in the open-shop environment of the public sector. A few ideas to that end: 1) We can make Union dues a fully refundable tax credit to encourage more sign ups, 2) We can fully fund the PERB