



## AFT Washington 2022 Candidate Questionnaire

### About AFT Washington

AFT Washington represents approximately 6,500 education professionals working in community and technical colleges, regional universities, early learning, and K-12. Our members work with all ages of students, from young children in pre-K education settings to adults in higher education, as well as all facets of education. Our members are bus drivers, maintenance workers, faculty, paraeducators, food service workers, custodians, success coaches, grounds crew members, and more.

Together, with our members and national organization, we advocate and fight for:

- Safe, welcoming, and thriving neighborhood schools for every student, and high-quality, affordable post-high school opportunities to fulfill our paramount duty to help *all* students succeed, at every level;
- Economic and advancement opportunities for everyone;
- Affordable, high-quality healthcare for everyone;
- Democracy, pluralism, and voting rights by involving the voices of students, parents, and the community, side-by-side with educational employees and elected officials;
- Racial, social, financial, and civic equity, and fighting back against discrimination, hatred, and bigotry.

We hope you will take this opportunity to complete the questionnaire below and allow us to better understand your candidacy. Completing the questionnaire is required for consideration of endorsement or possible campaign contributions. If our Committee on Political Education (COPE) decides they would like further information, we may ask you to participate in an interview.

To be considered, return your completed questionnaire via email, by close of business, on March 25<sup>th</sup> to [aftwashington@aftwa.org](mailto:aftwashington@aftwa.org). If you have questions, please leave a message at 206-242-4777.

---

### Candidate Biographical Information

**Name:** Brandy Donaghy

**Candidate for which office:** State Representative, 44<sup>th</sup> LD

**Party affiliation:** Democratic

**Political background** (*offices held or currently hold, offices ran for, party positions, etc.*):

Currently State Representative, 44<sup>th</sup> LD

Previously ran for Snohomish County Council, District 5 and South County Fire Commissioner.

**Community or organizational memberships (past and present):**

Snohomish County Democrats, 44<sup>th</sup> LD Democrats, Snohomish County NAACP, C3 - Communities of Color Coalition, local political activism organizations.

**Current occupation:**

State Representative, 44<sup>th</sup> LD

**Current employer:**

Washington State

**Are you currently a member of a labor organization?**

No

**If yes, which labor organization, and how long have you been a member?**

**If not currently a member of a labor organization, have you ever been?**

No

**If yes, which labor organization, when, and for how long?**

*General*

**1. Why are you running for this elective office?**

I believe in public service and collaborative leadership. All Washingtonians deserve to thrive, but to ensure that future, it is imperative that we are not leaving people behind, and that means meeting people where they are, rather than expecting everyone to come to us.

I found the 2022 legislative session to be so incredibly rewarding. We got some good work done, but there's a lot more we need to do, and I'm looking forward to being a part of that.

**2. What qualities distinguish you from other candidates for this office?**

I think that I bring a level of cultural competency that not everyone has, and I tend to look at policy through an equity lens. I'm also a creative problem solver with a very diverse background, as a Navy Veteran, a single mom working more than one job, to where I find myself now, with the privilege to be able to step up and serve.

*Revenue and Education*

1. For decades Washington State has had the most regressive tax system in the country, contributing to underfunding of public education and many other investments in the public good. **The pandemic has highlighted the numerous gaps in education funding that persist, for example in the form of the digital divide, the need for wrap-around services, stagnant wages, etc. When new funding is allocated, it is often for specific populations of students or specific programs and in relatively small sums. How will you approach finding new sources of revenue to both invest in Washingtonians and create a more progressive revenue system?**

**Do you support...**

	Yes	No
<b>Capital Gains Tax?</b>	*	
<b>Wealth Tax?</b>	*	
<b>Estate Tax?</b>	*	
<b>Elimination of cap on Workforce Education Investment Account tax?</b>	*	

*\*With all of the above questions I will say yes, but with a caveat – I believe that HOW we implement tax programs is incredibly important, and it’s always necessary to do so in a way that isn’t inadvertently causing harm to those we are intending to help.*

2. During the pandemic, many Washingtonians have lost their jobs and been evicted from their homes. The poverty rate has increased during the pandemic, particularly for BIPOC Americans. In the 2022 legislative session, a bill was introduced that would have given cash assistance to those below the poverty line with a stipend, also known as Universal Basic Income or Guaranteed Basic Income.

**What is your position on this policy? Do you believe it can help address the racial wealth gap?**

I have a major concern with Universal Basic Income, because it takes the responsibility off of employers to provide a livable wage, and I believe that to be the responsibility of employers. That said, I do also believe in providing basic income for those who are unable to work, or even between jobs. I think we have a responsibility to provide the necessary resources for those who are struggling, because while a rising tide lifts all boats, we need to make sure everyone has a boat first.

So, the short analogy is this: We must provide what is needed to make sure everyone has a boat, and that it’s in good repair – then ensure that employers, particularly large corporations, are providing sufficient wages to keep those boats afloat, with upgrades.

3. Public education, from K-12 through Post-High School has seen state disinvestment for several decades. **What will you do to increase the funding of community and technical colleges in order to invest in the workforce? Do you support pay equity for part-time faculty?**

We need to get more state and federal funding to our educational systems. That will likely mean creating new revenue sources or diverting funds from elsewhere. The reality is that healthy, educated communities are more productive, and everyone wins because the return on investment into education will be a positive one, but it will require a substantial initial outlay and that return will take time to manifest.

Those who educate us provide so much value to individuals and communities. They should be compensated with that in mind. We consistently undervalue to many educators.

4. Pre-K 12 employees work with students dealing with a wide range of issues outside of school, e.g. trauma, behavioral challenges, developmental disabilities, health issues and more. This can pose safety issues, for example for paraeducators who are often hit, bitten, shoved or in other ways harmed because of student behavior. Many factors contribute to this phenomenon, which translates to a range of potential solutions. **How would you approach problem solving if a group of workers sought your support in addressing this issue?**

First and foremost, we need to be certain that we are providing these workers with sufficient resources, educational and otherwise, to address these issues. And ultimately, we need additional in-school resources for the students as well.

I don't think there is a quick and easy way to solve issues like this, and both kids and staff have the right to feel safe and protected in school. I'm not, however, a proponent of involving law enforcement unless every other possible option has been exhausted. Mental health and developmental issues shouldn't be the domain of police.

5. In recent years public officials have attempted to solve budget problems through privatization of public services. This diversion of public funds has led to a poor quality of services, reduced accountability, and a loss of good jobs, while failing to realize the promise of saving money. **What is your position on privatization in the education arena? Please explain.**

I think that we have a responsibility to provide a quality public school education to every child. Privatization generally takes away control and oversight, without an improvement of services, which ultimately costs taxpayers far more than if we worked together to find better solutions under the public umbrella.

**Do you support...**

	Yes	No
<b>Public tax dollars funding private charter schools?</b>		<b>x</b>
<b>Privatization of school and college resources (i.e. counseling, childcare, student services)?</b>		<b>x</b>
<b>Public Capitol Funds for projects at private colleges and universities?</b>		<b>x</b>

*Collective Bargaining*

1. Many Washingtonians recognize the value of union representation and are organizing at their workplace, such as legislative aides in Olympia, workers at Starbucks, etc. **Do you support every worker's right to collectively bargain for better working conditions, and their right to join a union? Please explain.**

YES Unions and the ability to bargain protects workers.

2. We see ongoing attempts to weaken unions and diminish working conditions here in Washington State and at the federal level. **What policies can support unions and workers' rights and how will you work to enact such policies?**

I support polices that have requirements for fair treatment of workers, that do not impede the ability to collectively bargain, that encourage apprenticeships and create union jobs. These can come in many forms, on many different subjects. I do not support "Right to Work" policies because they undermine collective bargaining.

*Social Justice*

1. What do you see as **your role** as a state official in addressing racial, social, and economic inequities in our educational system? **Please specifically address each issue.**

I tend to view everything through an equity lens, and seek additional information if there is an issue I am unfamiliar with, because it's important to recognize the expertise of others. This means that when I am considering policy I am actively working to avoid creating additional harm, particularly to those who are already underrepresented in our systems. I think it's important to note that I'm not an expert in education, and I don't have all of the answers, but I do know that we need to both build a more diverse workforce within education, and we need to break down barriers to entry in order to do so equitably. I believe that a key piece of being a strong, effective leader is understanding when to follow

2. We are faced with numerous threats to social justice, including ongoing threats to our immigrant communities, the housing affordability and student debt crises, police accountability, and more. **Where have you shown leadership and acted on issues of social justice in the past? What will your social justice priorities be if you win your election?**

I've always leaned towards activism and have worked with a number of organizations to address many inequities that exist within our society, at various levels, from volunteer to leader and Board member. As a Black woman, I don't believe that I have the option not to work address social justice inequities.

3. Several bills were passed in the 2021 legislative session designed to reduce police violence and hold police accountable; in the 2022 session attempts were made to dilute the definition of excessive force and minimizing the role of de-escalation. **What is your position on these issues?**

I think they're complicated, and while I recognize what the 2021 bills were trying to do, and what the 2022 bills were attempting to "fix," I'm not confident that legislation that outlines how law enforcement should behave in any given situation is sufficient to address the issues we currently face. That is not to say that I don't have concerns, only that we've only seen a small piece of what must really be a far larger, more complicated, culture based solution.

4. Hate crimes have risen 25 percent nationally since 2015. But the number of hate crimes in Washington state increased by 97 percent. There were 542 hate-crime incidents reported statewide. **How do you plan on addressing the increase in hate crimes in Washington state?**

We need to take hate crimes seriously – every time. Far too often they're not taken as seriously, which can decrease the percentage that are reported in the first place, and that can make it seem more acceptable. That means holding law enforcement accountable for proper response but we also need to ensure the public has a better understanding of what constitutes a hate crime in the first place. I think we also need to consider how we deal with those who commit these crimes.

**Are there any additional comments you would like to provide that you believe are necessary in understanding your candidacy?**

I was appointed in 2021, and I was surprised to find just how much being in the legislature felt like coming home. I enjoy working on policy that helps ensure that everyone can thrive, and it's particularly important to me to work on community driven issues. I've always been someone who believes in leading from behind, and that's not going to change. I truly believe that being a public official is entirely about service to my community. It's not about me.

**What is your overall campaign budget?**

My current campaign budget estimates \$200,000.

**How many volunteers are currently working on your campaign? What is your goal for volunteers working on your campaign?**

I'm still getting started and focusing on fundraising so while I have a list of volunteers, I've not put them to work quite yet.

I am expecting to have a smaller group of regular volunteers, around 12, with considerably more who come out a few times.

**To date, how much money have you raised and obtained pledges for?**

From individuals, I've raised over 10k in donations and pledges, and a good number of organizations have pledged financial support as well, though most don't start providing those resources until May-June.

**Please provide any endorsements you have received:**

I've been individually endorsed by a number of my colleagues and other community leaders.

**Campaign address:** PO Box 12572 **City:** Mill Creek

**Zip:** 98082

**Campaign phone:** 425-802-0138 **Home phone:** N/a

**Email address:** brandy@electbbrandydonaghy.org

**Website address:** electbrandydonaghy.org