



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 25th to aftwashington@aftwa.org. If you have questions, please leave a message at 206-242-4777.

Candidate Biographical Information

Name: Lauren Davis

Candidate for which office: State Rep, 32nd LD, Pos 2

Party affiliation: Democrat

Political background (*offices held or currently hold, offices ran for, party positions, etc.*):
State Representative, 32nd LD, Pos 2: January 2019 - Present

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

King County Behavioral Health Advisory Board
NAMI Washington Public Policy Committee

Current occupation: State Representative & Strategy Director

Current employer: WA State Legislature & Washington Recovery Alliance

Are you currently a member of a labor organization? No

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

N/A

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

No

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

N/A

General

1. Why are you running for this elective office?

I am running for re-election because much of the work that propelled me to run for the legislature remains undone—progress related to behavioral health treatment, criminal legal reform, early learning, housing, and addressing domestic violence.

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

I have a proven track record of delivering for my constituents and Washingtonians across the state—including significant legislation, operating budget investments, capital budget investments, and solving problems at the agency/regulatory level. I am presently unaware of any other candidates for this office.

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 |
|--|------------|-----------|
| Capital Gains Tax? | X | |
| Wealth Tax? | X | |
| Estate Tax? | X | |
| Elimination of cap on Workforce Education Investment Account tax? | X | |

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?**

Yes, I support a UBI policy and do believe it can help address the racial wealth gap.

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?**

I will continue to advocate for increased funding for community and technical colleges, including and especially for additional supports for students who face extra barriers, additional faculty counselors, etc. I enthusiastically support pay equity for part-time faculty. I have had extensive conversations about this issue when I have met with AFT members in my district.

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?**

I would start with asking the workers what suggestions they have and what they see as the priority solutions. They would be in the best position to know what their students need and how to create a safer work environment. I would then host a stakeholder meeting to discuss ideas and solutions. Once solutions were identified, I would begin to socialize those solutions with other lawmakers and additional stakeholders.

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 wholeheartedly oppose the privatization of public education, including my long-standing opposition to charter schools.

Do you support...

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

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, I enthusiastically support the right to collectively bargain and join a union. I was proud to co-sponsor numerous labor bills this year, including both versions of the bill to finally allow our legislative staff to unionize.

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 am an ardent supporter of the labor movement and workers' rights. One miss from this past legislative session that I hope we can achieve next year is HB 1837 related to repetitive motion injuries.

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 wake up each morning with both an incredible sense of opportunity and an incredible sense of responsibility. This job provides the chance to do so much good to address issues of racial, social, and economic inequalities in our educational system. Having worked as a Head Start preschool teacher off and on for seven years, I am especially passionate advocate for the difference that access to early childhood education can make in reducing disparities in educational outcomes. My role involves listening to experts, constituents, and advocacy groups and supporting policies that advance equity in the education space. Though I do not currently serve on House committees that address early learning, K-12, or higher education, I do hope to at some point in my legislative career. The focus of my undergraduate work as an Ethnic Studies major was addressing the opportunity and achievement gaps in education. I am deeply interested in these issues.

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 have made great strides in my four years in office related to criminal legal system reform. I prime sponsored legislation (HB 2417, which passed in 2020) to undo the state's harmful "swift and certain" practice of re-incarcerating individuals on Department of Corrections community custody for low level violations. I also championed policy (HB 1348 in 2021) to allow individuals in jail to retain their Medicaid coverage for the first 30 days of incarceration. In 2020 and 2022, I prime sponsored legislation to end housing discrimination based on past incarceration history. I have also prime sponsored two pieces of legislation related to family reunification and maintaining contact with family of origin for children in the child welfare system. If re-elected, I plan to lead on advancing criminal legal system reform and child welfare reform and support all efforts related to

increasing housing affordability, decreasing student debt, supporting our immigrant neighbors, and ensuring police are held accountable when they violate the public's trust.

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 enthusiastically supported and voted for the suite of police reform bills during the 2021 legislative session. I truly believe these bills ignited a positive and long-overdue transformation in police culture. Since the passage of these bills, I heard from many, many constituents who were victims of crime and frustrated at the lack of police response. I also heard from the law enforcement agencies in my district expressing confusion/lack of clarity around interpretation of the new legislation and concerns about their ability to prevent and solve crime and keep our communities safe. One of the largest areas of concern was response to domestic violence calls. Domestic violence increased dramatically during the pandemic, including a 30% increase in DV homicide. The specific concern is that at the scene of a DV incident, a responding officer typically only has reasonable suspicion when they first arrive. If a DV suspect attempts to flee, the officer is unable to do anything. This creates an incredibly dangerous situation for the victim and their children. As a DV survivor myself, this is concerning. Along with the vast majority of my Democratic colleagues, including the authors of the police reform package, I supported HB 2037 in order to allow law enforcement to properly investigate crimes. HB 2037 authorizes the use of force only if (a) an officer has reasonable suspicion to believe a crime has been committed, (b) a suspect attempts to flee an investigative detention, (c) the suspect has been given notice that they are not free to leave, (d) law enforcement have first used all available and appropriate de-escalation techniques, (e) responding officers take into account the characteristics of the suspect (e.g. disability etc.), (f) law enforcement uses the least amount of force necessary to prevent the person from fleeing, and (g) officers cease using force as soon as possible. An officer who uses force outside of these strict guidelines would be in violation of state law.

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?**

As a member of the House Public Safety Committee, I have supported several measures related to addressing hate crimes in recent years, including HB 1732 (2019), which appropriately codified the term "hate crime" in statute, added gender identity/expression as a protected class, and increased civil penalties for a hate crime offense ten-fold. During the recent biennium, I supported HB 1071, which unfortunately did not pass. This bill would've included hate crimes in the list of "crimes against persons" as well as created an aggravating factor for other offenses that are based on hate. As far as next steps, I will seek guidance from the hate crime work group at the AG's office that was created under HB 1732 and would meet with stakeholders who are leaders in this space.

Campaign Information

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

N/A

What is your overall campaign budget?

\$75K

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

Current: 20

Goal: 30

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

\$13,750

Please provide any endorsements you have received:

None yet this cycle, as campaign season just started

Campaign address: PO Box 9100

City: Seattle

Zip: 98109

Campaign phone: 425-495-7122

Home phone:

Email address: lauren@electlaurendavis.com

Website address: www.electlaurendavis.com