



## 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.

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### Candidate Biographical Information

**Name:** Alicia Rule

**Candidate for which office:** State Representative, 42nd LD

**Party affiliation:** Democrat

**Political background** (*offices held or currently hold, offices ran for, party positions, etc.*): Current incumbent for Representative of the 42nd, former Blaine City Councilmember

**Community or organizational memberships (past and present):** Former President of the Blaine Downtown Alliance.

**Current occupation:** Owner and licensed independent clinical social worker at Rule and Associates

**Current employer:** I own a small outpatient mental health practice, Rule and Associates.

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

**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? Yes**

**If yes, which labor organization, when, and for how long?** I am a former member of SEIU.

*General*

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

I genuinely and passionately care about the community that has been home to my family for five generations and I am invested in ensuring this can continue to be a home for our children and grandchildren that includes a community that values its people, offers living wage and innovative union jobs for the next generation and preserves the natural beauty of this special place we get to call home.

**2. What qualities distinguish you from 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...**

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

Our tax system overburdens working families. We have to reform our laws to make sure the wealthiest are paying their fair share and rebuild our economy to work for everyone.

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 think there is great work to be done to address the racial wealth gap and that all of the policies we support need to be analyzed through a racial justice lens. I support tenant protections, policies and funding to make sure housing is affordable in every community and supported pathways to homeownership for minority communities. I would love to learn more about AFT's support for universal basic income.

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 must improve the state's investment in community and technical colleges. These investments are critical in creating many pathways to a career that allows workers to support themselves and their families and retire with dignity. These investments help us create and support the workforce of tomorrow- which is of immediate concern due to the fact that many industries in WA will start to (or even continue) to face worker shortages as their aging workforce retires.

Yes, of course I support pay equity for part-time faculty.

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?**

My career as a mental health practitioner has put me in many uncomfortable situations with vulnerable and traumatized people over the years, so I understand how these issues can arise and cause harm. We need empathetic and compassionate programs and resources in our schools to help creatively solve these problems as they arrive, which is why I worked in Olympia to ensure that every school has access to a counselor, a nurse, and increased behavioral support and funding.

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 do not support privatization in the education arena. With privatization we will see less transparency and lower standards. It is our responsibility as a state to provide high quality public education to all of our kids.

**Do you support...**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<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.**

I support legislation to strengthen unions and correct the impacts caused by the Janus decision, including additional laws to modify the public disclosure act to protect workers' privacy. I oppose proposals to weaken unions and collective bargaining because these efforts hurt BOTH workers and our economy. One reason why our economy is doing so well is that we have a higher percentage of organized workers than most states in America. Frankly, we need more unionized workers, not less. Collective bargaining is absolutely critical to racial and gender equality, since low-wage, non-managerial jobs are disproportionately filled by marginalized groups.

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?**

In addition to the previous answer, as the labor market continues to evolve, we need to be sure that legislation evolves to support workers and unions. I full-heartedly support passage of the PRO Act at the Federal level- it is past time to update our labor laws.

*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 know that our communities are made stronger through both access to quality education and through diversity in society. Finding ways to ensure that all kids and people of every background have access to this quality education is a primary goal of mine, and I will continue to work with shareholders and educators to ensure that we are successful.

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?**

As a city councilmember, I initiated and we passed a resolution for Sikh awareness month in Blaine. As your State Representative, I will continue to work hard to incorporate racial justice into all of our decisions.

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 minimize the role of de-escalation. **What is your position on these issues?**

It's important that we balance protecting the public with clarity for law enforcement and first responders who provide an invaluable service to our communities. This is an ongoing conversation and I look forward to continuing working towards solutions that address the needs of our communities. Right now, the policing system isn't working for anyone- we ask police to do too much, especially work that they are not trained to do. I support increasing mental health and other service providers to support our community members in need.

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?**

#### Campaign Information

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

**What is your overall campaign budget?**

We have an overall campaign budget of \$300,000 for the primary and general elections.

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

Last campaign, we had dozens of dedicated volunteers and are planning on the same this cycle.

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

So far we have raised over \$47,000.

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

Bellingham Mayor Seth Fleetwood  
Bellingham City Council Hollie Huthman  
Former Bellingham City Council Kate Bishop  
Whatcom County Executive Satpal Sidhu  
Whatcom County Council Rud Browne  
Whatcom County Council Carol Frazey  
Ferndale Mayor Greg Hanson  
State Senator Liz Lovelett  
Peter Frazier

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**Home phone:**

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