



tn educational equity coalition



A GUIDE FOR ADVOCATES

2018 GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES STANCE ON EDUCATION ISSUES

TEACHER PAY

KARL DEAN (D)

When it comes to teacher pay, Karl Dean believes it is vital to attracting and retaining high-quality teachers. Dean increased teacher pay as Mayor of Nashville- the city went from 30th to 3rd in the state under his administration.

BILL LEE (R)

Bill Lee supports increasing teacher pay, but thinks it is first important to think about how to fund a pay hike.

SCHOOL VOUCHERS

KARL DEAN (D)

Karl Dean does not support using taxpayer dollars to fund private schools- otherwise known as school vouchers or education savings accounts (ESAs). Dean believes vouchers undermine public education by moving dollars to fund a private system, without placing any assurance on the quality of these schools.

BILL LEE (R)

Bill Lee is a proponent of school vouchers, having supported state school vouchers in the past. Lee believes such vouchers allow families an opportunity to send their children to a private school of their choice.

TNREADY

KARL DEAN (D)

Karl Dean supports annual testing of students. However, Dean believes that administration challenges with the assessment prompted a loss of credibility. Dean supports a “detailed plan” to prevent further mistakes, with an extensive “back-up” plan in place prior to administration. Dean believes these steps are necessary to restore trust in the TNReady assessment.

BILL LEE (R)

Lee also supports testing, but advocates for reducing some aspects of testing may be burdensome to teachers and students. Lee believes in having dialogue with school districts on the “goals” of education- and if these goals aren’t being met, would consider a change in TNReady. Under the status quo, Lee advocates for restoring trust in the TNReady assessment.

UNIVERSAL PRE-K

KARL DEAN (D)

Dean believes that if Tennessee holds education to be its #1 priority, increased investment in pre-kindergarten is warranted.

BILL LEE (R)

When it comes to pre-k expansion, Bill Lee advocates for the improvement of educator preparation programs and nonprofits to expand pre-K access. Lee hesitates to expand pre-K without evidence of its effectiveness and quality.

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RURAL EDUCATION

KARL DEAN (D)

Karl Dean believes rural school districts face unique circumstances that warrant different state focus. Dean is wary of expanding charter schools to rural school districts, but instead would consider re-evaluating the state's K-12 funding formula, with a focus on an increase in rural school funding. In terms of a focus on workforce readiness, Dean holds that rural school districts/regions need expanded access to technology in order to prepare students for workforce and post-secondary opportunities.

BILL LEE (R)

Bill Lee advocates for investing in vocational, technical, and agricultural education to increase the number of ready-to-work high school graduates in rural areas. Lee also supports increasing technology access to rural schools to assist students in reaching their educational goals.

ACCOUNTABILITY

KARL DEAN (D)

Karl Dean supports annual testing of students for school accountability. To Dean, accountability systems ensure that all students are on-track for success. Dean is also an advocate of school, educator, and family input in the accountability process.

BILL LEE (R)

Bill Lee supports school accountability, but believes in a re-evaluation of existing accountability measures. For Lee, it is imperative that accountability systems are efficient and developed with input from schools and families.

K-12 SCHOOL SPENDING

KARL DEAN (D)

Karl Dean advocates for a re-evaluation of our state's Basic Education Program- which is Tennessee's K-12 funding formula. For Dean, an increase in funding would come from setting and remaining committed to education priorities.

BILL LEE (R)

Bill Lee advocates for a cost-effective approach to K-12 school spending, calling for more transparency in education funding. Lee would approach existing funding with a "use it or lose it" requirement to eliminate spending waste.

TEACHER EVALUATION

KARL DEAN (D)

Karl Dean believes that student growth on annual assessments should be included on teacher evaluations. However, he advocates for "fair" teacher evaluation systems that offer support to teachers in order to reach their goals.

BILL LEE (R)

Bill Lee supports the use of student growth in teacher evaluation systems, but hopes to re-evaluate its incorporation during his transition to governor. Lee views teacher evaluation systems as "tools" for future teacher growth. Lee envisions merging evaluation systems with teacher mentoring and professional development which would create a more cooperative model.

ACHIEVEMENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

KARL DEAN (D)

As Governor, Karl Dean would re-evaluate the Achievement School District to assess its effectiveness and see what has worked and what has not. After an evaluation, Dean would place students at the center of any decisions he makes regarding the ASD.

BILL LEE (R)

Bill Lee believes that the Achievement School District's presence has led to some innovation and improvement. Lee also finds the iZone models in Memphis to be effective, and hopes to encourage further collaboration between the ASD and iZone models. Lee affirms the support of lower-performing schools as a priority.

WORKFORCE READINESS

KARL DEAN (D)

Karl Dean believes in the value of a postsecondary education, but advocates for increased career and technical exposure prior to high school graduation through nonprofit and business partnerships. Dean also advocates for investing in high-quality, career and technical certificate options for Tennesseans.

BILL LEE (R)

Bill Lee is a proponent for improving the state's workforce readiness through increased career and technical education opportunities. As a businessperson, Lee hopes to bring together private sector industries and school leaders to create a shared vision for apprenticeships, trainings, and curricula design.

ARMING EDUCATORS

KARL DEAN (D)

Karl Dean does not support arming teachers with guns in the K-12 classroom. To Dean, such a practice has the potential to create a host of other issues- storage, use, and additional school anxieties.

BILL LEE (R)

Bill Lee believes arming teachers is one important step that can be taken to better protect K-12 students. Lee advocates exploring various avenues for school safety, including increasing the presence of school resource officers and retired military.

TUITION EQUALITY

KARL DEAN (D)

Karl Dean supports providing access to in-state tuition for Tennessee graduates who are undocumented, saying, "They're Tennesseans and part of our community."

BILL LEE (R)

Bill Lee opposes offering in-state tuition for undocumented Tennessee graduates, saying, "...he would not offer something to an immigrant here illegally that we wouldn't offer to a citizen from another state."

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