

As a public school teacher in Portland I support raising the minimum wage to at least \$15 an hour and creating a single payer health care system. Educators have been under attack about achievement gaps and accountability, when in reality the problem that we have is poverty and inequality. Education outcomes are outstanding in higher income schools and compare to the top ranking countries in the world. However, the US has one of the highest child poverty rates in the OECD and in Portland, one out of four students in live households struggling with poverty. Oregon also has one of the highest absentee rates in the nation. Poverty is a major factor, when I know some of my students miss school to provide child care for siblings as their parents scramble with multiple low paying jobs to try to make ends meet.

We should incentivize work by making work pay and guarantee everyone universal access to health care, not profits to private insurance companies.

Educators also struggle with lack of funding for our schools. By increasing the minimum wage, we can cut down on spending on entitlements that really serve as welfare for low paying corporations that make record profits, while also bringing in more revenue in the form of taxes on rising incomes.

Hyung Nam

Portland Public Schools social studies teacher