



**WASHINGTON EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE
KING COUNTY EXECUTIVE
CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE**

2009

Candidate Dow Constantine

These are my official positions in seeking office.

Candidate Signature Dow

Date May 18, 2009

This questionnaire is for the exclusive use of the WEA in determining a candidate's position and qualifications.

Return questionnaire to:
Rosemary Wolf, Washington Education Association
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253-765-7082/rwolf@washingtonea.org

**WEA-PAC
KING COUNTY EXECUTIVE
CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE
2009**

Please state your position and/or views to the following questions.

1. Why are you a candidate for the office of King County Executive?

I want to set the foundation for a new prosperity, for our economy and working families, with real transit and transportation choices, sensible and humane criminal justice, responsible preservation of our environment, and genuine regional leadership.

At this historic moment this county needs renewal -- to clear away the debris of that which is no longer working, perfect that which is, and build an efficient, effective, 21st-century government.

Building on my record as a reformer unafraid of taking the lead on tough issues, I will work across geographic boundaries and partisan divides to zero in on effective solutions to the problems we face as a region.

2. Why do you believe you are the best qualified candidate for this position?

To meet the challenges working families across King County face we must make difficult decisions that will require strong, new leadership, a true regional focus, and an emphasis on lasting solutions—not on gimmicks and quick fixes that saddle taxpayers and future generations with even greater problems.

I offer a real record of reform, a focus on regional cooperation, and the vision to lead King County forward. And I have never hesitated to take on the tough issues and do the “heavy lifting”.

I’ve taken on the tough issues, and I have the scars to prove it. So I am not intimidated by the problems we face, nor by the campaign we must wage to bring my message of focus and change to voters across King County.

3. What do you feel is the appropriate relationship between the government of King County and the public schools in King County?

King County government should be a partner to our schools, not a governing body. Specifically, the county should work to provide services like transportation and transit infrastructure that allow families with school age kids and school employees to move efficiently. The county should work with schools to provide access to county facilities like parks and playfields. In the rural and unincorporated areas public safety—from crosswalks to sheriff’s deputies—must be available to make the learning experience safe. Public Health plays a role, especially in areas related to influenza outbreaks and basic health services and outreach.

Some of this work is already being done: programs like New Futures, placement of community support officers in schools, dropout prevention activities that provide a safety net for at risk kids, gang avoidance and intervention—all of these help integrate county activities to the benefits of public education.

As Executive, one thing I would consider is whether the county should convene an education summit—similar to the gathering Seattle Mayor Norm Rice assembled in the late 1980's—to assess what the county can do, and shouldn't do, with respect to helping our schools, students, teachers and families succeed.

I will then act upon those recommendations to advocate for policy locally and in Olympia, to help better define and deliver on areas where the county can help advance quality public education.

4. If elected, how would you use your office to promote the interests of children, students and public education in King County?

While the office of Executive does not have a lot of direct impact on education policy, it does provide a bully pulpit for advocacy on behalf of public education. I have always remained active with my alma mater, West Seattle High, speaking at events, helping raise funds, and donating time and resources to help kids succeed. While I cannot promise that level of involvement in all King County schools, my commitment to helping today's students is unmatched.

As stated above, I intend to use the office to explore productive and useful partnerships that create a positive environment for education. I will also make myself available to WEA and others to weigh in on important policy issues that impact King County schools and kids.

5. Are you personally involved in the public schools in your community? Please describe any past or current involvement.

As the son of a retired AFT member and a retired WEA member, and a product of the Seattle Public Schools, I am 100% committed to our public schools and have worked hard both as an elected official and a resident of King County to ensure our schools have the support and resources they require.

I am co-founder and Vice-President of the West Seattle High School Foundation, raising funds for instructional and extracurricular programs.

I served five years as the President of the West Seattle High School Alumni Association, raising money for college scholarships for graduates.

Before that I co-founded and served on the West Seattle High School Site Council.

I have supported the Vashon and Highline schools through private donations and obtaining government funding. I have also championed programs like New Futures that help at-risk kids and their families in the Highline district.

6. Please list organizations you are affiliated with that work on behalf of children, students and/or public schools.

2000-Present West Seattle High School Foundation *Founder, Vice-President*
2000-Present Stone Soup Foundation *Board Member, Former President*
1998-2005 Delridge Neighborhoods Development Association *Board Member*
2002-2004 ArtsWest *Board Member*
1996-2001 West Seattle High School Alumni Association *President*
1995-1998 West Seattle HelpLine *Board Member*

7. Please briefly describe any interactions or work you have done on behalf of the community and technical colleges in King County.

My father was a community college instructor for three decades, at Highline, then the original Seattle Community College, and then at North Seattle from the day it opened until his retirement.

I have a deep understanding and appreciation of our two-year institutions and a track record of support.

I have worked with community colleges in my district and throughout the county, in both Olympia and on the council, to invest in training, modernize facilities, improve compensation for instructors and encourage a curriculum that is as diverse as the students who enroll in these colleges. In particular, I have worked over time with Highline and South Seattle to obtain legislative funding for capital projects.

8. The 2009 year began with a \$93 million shortfall and cuts to departments and services. How would you solve the budget gap for 2010 while still ensuring that health and other basic human services would continue to be provided?

A central and consistent message of my campaign is that we need to address the county budget crisis responsibly and with an understanding that the structural problems that have created the budget crisis are not going to be solved by quick fixes or adherence to the status quo.

At the same time, fundamental change doesn't need to result in job loss, service cuts, or feel-good "reforms" that in the end don't solve any real or immediate problems.

We saw all of these worst instincts in Olympia this last session: massive cuts to education and health care, a refusal to address the underlying cause of the funding crisis, and window dressing education reforms that are little more than unfunded mandates and erode trust between educators and state government. It's a blueprint for how NOT to manage the crisis in King County.

So my approach is this: First, we ask workers in every department to suggest ways in which they can improve efficiency and trim costs. We cannot succeed with real reform without the trust and ideas of front line service providers. By offering incentives from pay bonuses to job security, we can begin reshaping county government responsibly.

Second, we seek ways to save money through cutting administrative and executive staff, looking for duplication of efforts in policy generation, oversight and other areas and allowing unfilled positions to be phased out. As council chair I already eliminated three

full time positions that were open due to transfer and retirement. As executive I'll make this a broader policy.

Third, high paid, non-union employees need to pay a greater share of their benefits. Last week I introduced legislation to require co-pay on health care premiums for high wage county employees and elected officials. It's a simple, common sense proposal that will save money and jobs.

Fourth, King County needs to eliminate programs that simply aren't working. I've been an outspoken advocate for phasing out the county animal shelter in Kent. Others are having more success in saving the lives of animals.

Finally, the next county executive needs to speak out in Olympia and Washington, DC for genuine reform of our regressive, boom and bust tax structure and maximize local investments to help counties and cities deal with a growing share of service provision. I am a proud co-author of the legislation authorizing the Gate Commission report on tax reform, and would like to see more of these ideas put into action. I recently passed legislation to maximize use of federal stimulus funds entering King County, and will continue pressing for needed federal resources to help address current and future budget challenges.

9. What do you believe the role of unions should be in the County's budget and legislative processes? What steps will you take to ensure their meaningful participation?

In the Legislature and on the County Council I have worked closely with unions to ensure that county resources are spent in the best interests of our working families, and I will involve unions at the negotiating table as public projects develop. I maintained a 100% labor voting record in the House and Senate, and have been resolute in my support of county workers.

10. What have you done to support community and union organizing in your life? What will you continue to do as the King County Executive?

I have publicly supported organizing drives, walked the picket line and invaded a board meeting for striking nurses at the former West Seattle Mental Health. At the request of a UFCW local I have recently urged the board of a local nonprofit (to which I have in the past been a donor, no less) to come to the table and reach an agreement. And my insistence on prevailing wage language and labor peace in connection with the imposition of a new mental illness and drug dependency revenue source helped produce new labor agreements. From my days as a salmon cold storage plant worker, when we organized for the Alaska Fishermen's Union, to the days of the teachers strikes that sent my parents to the picket lines, I have always been with the workers, and will continue to stand up for workers' rights at King County Executive.

11. What organizations, elected officials and noteworthy individuals are currently supporting your candidacy?

Rep. Eileen Cody, State Representative 34th LD
Rep. Bob Hasegawa, State Representative, 11th LD
Rep. Sharon Nelson, State Representative, 34th LD
Rep. Tina Orwall, State Representative, 33rd LD
Rep. Geoff Simpson, State Representative, 47th LD
Rep. Brendan Williams, State Representative, 22nd LD
Sen. Lisa Brown, Senate Majority Leader, 3rd LD
Sen. Ken Jacobsen, State Senator, 46th LD
Sen. Karen Keiser, State Senator, 33rd LD
Sen. Joe McDermott, State Senator, 34th LD
Sen. Ed Murray, State Senator, 43rd LD
Sen. Kevin Ranker, State Senator, 40th LD
Snohomish County Council Chair Mike Cooper
Burien Mayor Joan McGilton
Tukwila City Councilmember Joe Duffie
Tukwila City Councilmember Verna Griffin
Former Covington City Councilmember Rebecca Clark
Port of Seattle Commissioner Gael Tarleton
ATU Local 587
Vashon-Maury Island Democratic Club
34th LD Democrats
MEBA Dist 1
Sailors' Union of the Pacific
SeaTac Fire Fighters 2919

CANDIDATE BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

NAME Dow Constantine

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OCCUPATION Chair, King County Council

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Office Phone 206-484-7921 **Cell Phone** xxx

Organizational Memberships (church, community, service, social, union, professional, etc.)

2000-Present	West Seattle High School Foundation <i>Founder, Vice-President</i>
2000-Present	Stone Soup Foundation <i>Board Member, Former President</i>
2002-2004	ArtsWest <i>Board Member</i>
1998-2005	Delridge Neighborhoods Development Association <i>Board Member</i>
1996-2001	West Seattle High School Alumni Association <i>President</i>
1995-1998	West Seattle HelpLine <i>Board Member</i>
1992-1998	Allied Arts of Seattle <i>Trustee</i>

Education

Master's Degree, Urban Planning, University of Washington, 1992

Law Degree, University of Washington, 1989

Bachelor's Degree, Political Science, University of Washington, 1985

Graduate of West Seattle High School, 1980

Brief Employment History

King County Councilmember, Dist. 8	2002-Present (Chair since Jan 2009)
State Senator, 34 th LD	2000-2001
State Representative, 34 th LD	1996-1999
Attorney/Admitted to practice in WA	1990-Present