

**Please provide your general and specific thoughts on how the county can address the unmet needs facing our schools. Detail how you would prioritize aid for education in your budget deliberations.**

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The school budget must be predicated on realistic expectations of funding by the state and the county without the need to continually raise tax rates. The county's revenue from the property tax and income tax annually increases at stable tax rates. The school board and the county commissioners must negotiate the sharing of the increased revenue. The priorities for available funding should be those that have direct interaction with students (educators, bus drivers, food service, resource officers etc.).

**There is considerable room for improvement in addressing educator recruitment and retention. Class sizes have increased because of cost-cutting measures and/or due to hiring freezes, layoffs, and retirements. Many support personnel positions have been eliminated. And Maryland is always challenged with filling educator jobs because we import nearly half of all certificated teachers from prep programs in other states. The coronavirus pandemic has exacerbated these shortages. At the same time, the Blueprint calls for the hiring of 15,000 additional educators to provide more individualized attention to students. How will you address critical concerns with educator recruitment and retention?**

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The school system should have a two-fold plan to acquire new teachers from internal and external sources. The internal/in-house plan is to "grow your own." For example, offering Conditional Teaching Certificates to SMCPS employees who meet the educational requirements, and promoting the "Teacher Academy of Maryland" (TAM) program. The external/out-of-county plan should focus on recruiting new college graduates and seasoned educators from out-of-state. Retention is a question of job satisfaction derived from salary, benefits, and working conditions. The "BluePrint" largely addresses compensation. It is said "People don't quit a job, they quit a boss." Are teachers leaving teaching or an employer? The administration must support continual improvement in working conditions. St. Mary's County (and to a greater extent Southern Maryland) is a very unique place to live and work. We need to use that to our advantage as part of the support and salary being offered.

**Do you support or oppose Maryland's updated maintenance of effort law that requires local jurisdictions to fund the local share of all wealth-equalized formulas, instead of only the foundation formula?**

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Support

**Additional Comments:**

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It is not a choice of supporting or opposing but simply complying with the law. If the law does not make sense for our community, we should be open and transparent in offering solutions to update current laws and influence the future.

**As a Board member, are you in favor of allocating public funding to home and privately schooled students?**

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Support

**Additional Comments:**

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I am in favor of funding successful programs. When resources are limited, money should be spent wherever the biggest value lies

**Do you support or oppose local autonomy to develop evaluation systems in compliance with statute and regulation?**

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Support

**Additional Comments:**

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I support local autonomy. We the citizens of the county are in the best position to determine what is best for our community.

**Do you support or oppose efforts to overturn school districts mutually agreed upon, statutorily compliant evaluation models in pursuit of one-size-fits-all models developed by federal and state agencies, rather than local education agencies?**

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Oppose

**Additional Comments:**

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Decisions should be made at the local level with those directly involved.

**Do you support or oppose efforts to provide educators with sufficient professional development to ensure that they can deliver high-quality instruction aligned with College and Career Readiness?**

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Support

**Additional Comments:**

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Anyone that works with children should be well trained and fully equipped

**Do you support or oppose public education employees' rights to bargain collectively?**

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Support

**Additional Comments:**

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Unions have played a very important role in this country and serve as a counterbalance to management.

**How familiar are you with the EASMC contract?**

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Familiar

**Additional Comments:**

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(No response)

**What changes, if any, would you like to see? And how would you honor the negotiated agreement, especially in tight fiscal times?**

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There are no changes to be made at this point, trying to rewrite history is a waste of resources. As an incoming Board member I would honor the agreement while also looking to have open and honest discussion with all parties involved when circumstances change or things need to be reevaluated.

**How will you address the impact that the housing crisis has on our students, including the need for mental health supports?**

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To start, I would not be making any decision based on an estimate from almost 3 years ago. A lot in the world has changed in 3 years and if we are making impactful decisions we should have the most up to date information as possible. With that said, kids experiencing homelessness or mental health issues will certainly bring those issues to school. I don't have a solution, but would support efforts to support those kids in the classroom.

**EASMC supports honesty in education. To encourage critical thinking, we believe educators should have professional autonomy and should be afforded the deference to teach the truth in their classrooms, schools, and districts. Do you support or oppose this position?**

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Support

**Additional Comments:**

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The truth should always be taught with personal bias limited as much as possible.

**How will you support diversity, equity, and inclusion for all students throughout the county? What specific policies do you support whose goals are focused on providing equitable access, opportunities, resources, and supports?**

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There are various contexts of D-E-I, e.g., social, political, economic. School board Policy ACA - Educational Equity and Regulation ACA-R appear to be inclusive of D-E-I. It tasks the superintendent of schools to “ensure that the staff develops appropriate guidelines for applying an equity lens to programs, procedures, practices, decision-making, resources, and actions impacting our students.” I will consider the recommendations of the superintendent in the implementation of this policy.

**Do you support or oppose local efforts to create and support community schools in areas of concentrated poverty?**

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Support

**Additional Comments:**

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There is the narrow concept of “community schools” providing school-based services in areas of concentrated poverty, i.e., socioeconomic status.

**As a Board member, what would you do to increase parental involvement and public support for our public schools and educators?**

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I support the adoption of a school board policy specifying the participatory rights of parents in the public school system. Ultimately, parents and the public will make their own decisions about the level to which they can and will be involved.

**As a Board member, are you in favor of contracting out custodial, cafeteria, and maintenance services rather than have those services provided by Board of Education employees?**

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Oppose

**Additional Comments:**

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The decision should be based on whether there are sufficient school system employees to perform the work, and whether the employees have the requisite skills

**As a board of education member, how will you advocate with our county commissioners for meeting the school systems needs?**

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The school system’s “needs” must be fiscally realistic within the constraints of funding from the state and county. The expectation of the county commissioners consistently raising tax rates is politically unrealistic. Before the stage of negotiating with the county commissioners, it is necessary to instill fiscal and political realism in the school budget process.

**Date**

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