

**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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It is the legal responsibility of the Superintendent of Schools to submit a recommended budget which meets the needs of the school system to the Board of Education for approval after discussion, public input, and changes. It is the responsibility of the Commissioners of St. Mary's County to provide the funding. We are "the what we need" and the county commissioners are "the how to provide the funding." We have two distinct lines of responsibility. The number one priority is to fund the negotiated agreements and support academic achievement.

**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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Continue to foster a school system which shows respect, provides quality pay and benefits. Supports professional development. Ensures good working conditions and a "seat at the table". Continue to Grow Our Own. Continue Teacher Academy of Maryland at Tech Center. Continue support for para-educators, substitute teachers, and support staff to excel to licensed teachers. Continue programs to foster interest in teacher education at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Continue Future Educators of America Program. Continue to have an inclusive working environment. Continue to provide a safe, attractive, orderly and healthy working environment. Continue check-in with new and newly hired educators on a recurring basis. Continue to hire as early as possible. Continue to work collaboratively with association on areas of common interests, concerns, and opportunities. Continue the emergency leave bank. Continue mentoring programs. Continue Employee Health Center.

**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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**Additional Comments:**

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(No response)

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

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Oppose

**Additional Comments:**

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(No response)

**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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(No response)

**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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**Additional Comments:**

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(No response)

**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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(No response)

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

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Support

**Additional Comments:**

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(No response)

**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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No changes. The negotiated agreements, as these stand, is fully supported by both sides, management and labor. We do everything in our power to find a way to make the negotiated agreement work in tight fiscal times. It might mean tightening our belts even more and making tough decisions.

**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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Continue to provide guidance counselors, psychologists, social workers, school nurses, resource officers, and community partners for mental health supports. Continue to support our school health centers. Provide training to employees on mental health issues. Continue to make genuine connections with homeless and transitional housed students. Continue to use the Health Hub in the Great Mills community. Provide transportation for students to attend their regular school if they relocated to another neighborhood or homeless shelter. Continue School Closets with food, clothing, school supplies, and hygiene products.

**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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(No response)

**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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Ensure a diverse workforce. Provide equity in facilities, programs, resources, and opportunities. Provide access to technology for all. Embrace "One size does not fit all" in teaching and learning. Develop relationships and connections where students strive and succeed. Foster an environment where everyone matters. Set high expectations for all students. Being receptive to diverse learners, cultures, backgrounds, and experiences. Recognize our own biases and strive to eliminate them. Recognize and celebrate different ethnic groups during specially recognized events and everyday.

**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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(No response)

**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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Provide a welcoming, respectful, and positive school environment where parents, students, and community are valued. Have a pleasant and helpful front office personnel. Continue family engagement opportunities and parental training with meals and childcare. Have notices in different languages. Provide fairs, exhibits, and outreach programs with community resources for families. Allow surveys to seek input to determine needs and interest of students, parents, and community. Send out positive messages to parents encouraging participation. Promote Go to School with Your Child Program, Back to School Programs, Grandparents Day, etc. Continue to provide food, clothing, school supplies, and toiletries. Promote partnerships with Naval Air Station, Pax Partnership, etc.

**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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(No response)

**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 Board of Education meets formally with the Commissioners of St. Mary's County at least twice yearly. In addition, the Superintendent and Chair of the Board meets individually with each commissioner on a recurring basis representing the views of the BOE. BOE members also talk with CSMC informally throughout the year through phone calls and at various events. Our Chief Financial Officer attends regularly scheduled CSMC meetings to make presentations and answer any questions they may have. As a matter of fact, we are open, honest, and transparent where all department heads are readily available to answer any questions under the direction of the Superintendent of Schools.