



2026 GENERAL ASSEMBLY CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

CANDIDATE: Adrienne Mathis

CAMPAIGN ADDRESS: [REDACTED]

POINT OF CONTACT: [REDACTED]

PHONE NUMBER(S): [REDACTED]

EMAIL: [REDACTED]

WEBSITE: mathisformd.com

OFFICE/DISTRICT: Maryland House of Delegates, District 29B

I confirm that the responses provided here are my official positions in seeking state office, and I understand that MSEA reserves the right to share my responses with members and interested parties.

CANDIDATE SIGNATURE: 

DATE SUBMITTED: 3/12/2026

*Candidates: In order to be considered for a recommendation, you must indicate your response to each of the questions. **Clarifications, explanations, and other information may be attached, but please be certain to indicate clearly the question(s) to which you refer.** Please return your completed and signed questionnaire to MSEA.*

1. Please share why you want to run for the Maryland General Assembly.

As a lifelong resident of St. Mary's County, born on the Patuxent River Naval Base, and a retired educator with over 30 years in our public schools, including as an assistant principal, I am deeply committed to the community that shaped me. I raised my family here, graduated from local schools, and dedicated my career to inspiring students and fostering growth. I'm running for the Maryland General Assembly in District 29B because I believe in fair, steady leadership that addresses our unique needs—strengthening education, boosting economic diversity, protecting our environment, and ensuring health and safety for all. St. Mary's County is my home, heritage, and heartbeat, and I want to bring our voices to Annapolis to build a resilient future through thoughtful investments and collaboration.

2. Please outline your top three public education priorities, how you will engage educators, and how you would achieve and measure success on each.

My top three priorities for public education are: (1) Ensuring equitable and well-funded schools to close achievement gaps and provide seamless educational pathways; (2) Supporting mental health and wellness for students and educators to create safe, thriving learning environments; and (3) Enhancing teacher recruitment and retention through competitive pay, professional development, and reduced administrative burdens.

To engage educators, I will hold regular town halls, listening sessions, and advisory committees with teachers, support staff, and administrators from St. Mary's County and across Maryland. As a retired educator myself, I value their frontline insights and will collaborate with organizations like MSEA to amplify their voices in policy discussions.

For achievement and measurement:

- On equitable funding, I'll advocate for increased state aid via the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, measuring success by improved student performance metrics (e.g., graduation rates, test scores) and reduced disparities in under-resourced areas.
- For mental health, I'll push for more counselors and programs, tracking success through attendance rates, disciplinary incidents, and surveys on school climate.
- For recruitment/retention, success will be measured by lower turnover rates, higher certification numbers, and educator satisfaction surveys.

3. Please explain how you would work with your state and local education association when faced with potential legislation relating to education issues (i.e., adequate funding, employee rights, special education, teacher certification, curriculum development, union rights, student discipline).

As a former educator with deep ties to St. Mary's County Public Schools, I would prioritize close collaboration with MSEA and local associations like the Education Association of St. Mary's County. Before supporting or introducing legislation, I would consult them for expert input on impacts to funding, rights, and classroom realities. This includes participating in briefings, joint advocacy efforts, and incorporating their recommendations into amendments. For instance, on union rights or employee protections, I'd ensure bills strengthen collective bargaining. My approach emphasizes transparent communication and partnership to craft policies that truly benefit educators and students, drawing from my own experience in the system.

4. Please provide your general and specific thoughts on the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. Also discuss how you would prioritize state aid for public education (K-12 and community college) when helping to craft the state budget or voting on it.

I strongly support the Blueprint for Maryland's Future as a transformative framework that addresses long-standing inequities in our education system. Generally, it's a bold investment in our children's futures, emphasizing early childhood education, teacher excellence, and community schools. Specifically, I appreciate its focus on career readiness, special education enhancements, and funding formulas that direct resources to high-need districts, such as those in rural areas like St. Mary's County.

When crafting or voting on the state budget, I would prioritize public education aid by advocating for full Blueprint funding as a non-negotiable baseline, allocating resources based on student needs (e.g., poverty, English learners, disabilities). I'd support progressive revenue measures to sustain it without cutting other essentials, ensuring K-12 and community colleges receive predictable increases. In St. Mary's, this means bolstering programs tied to our military and tech economy and measuring impact through accountability metrics such as college/career readiness rates.

5. With any large piece of legislation like the Blueprint, adjustments and amendments will be needed throughout implementation. Do you commit to work with MSEA when developing any amendment proposals to the Blueprint law?

- Agree
 Disagree

6. MSEA not only represents certificated teachers, but many other educators in the school buildings. These folks are typically called Education Support Professionals (ESPs) and are made up of nine career categories: Clerical Services, Custodial and Maintenance Services, Food Services, Health and Student Services, Paraeducators, Security Services, Skilled Trades, Technical Services, and Transportation Services.

Too many ESPs need to work second jobs and struggle to provide for their families, buy homes, save for their futures, and afford community or four-year college tuition for their children to learn a trade and plan a career. The looming threats of privatization by school districts, which would import even lower-paid workers from outside areas, risk the stability of schools and communities and further undermine the value of ESPs and their jobs.

ESPs across the state are organizing to build presence, strength, and power in a campaign focused on a bill of rights that defines the issues long nagging these dedicated employees and now threatening not only the recruitment of new employees but the retention of dedicated veteran employees. You can read about the [ESP Bill of Rights here](#). Do you support the ESP Bill of Rights?

- Support
 Oppose

Please share policy priorities/initiatives that will help make the ESP Bill of Rights a reality in Maryland:

7. How have you and how will you continue to use your position to protect Maryland educators, students, and residents in the face of threats from the federal government, including the recent rollback of rights for immigrants, the LGBTQIA community, and other marginalized communities?

My 30-year career in public education has been marked by strong advocacy for inclusive environments, specifically supporting policies that protect LGBTQIA+ students and immigrant families within St. Mary's schools. Beyond my professional role, I have actively participated in community efforts to establish safe spaces, particularly as a response to federal policy rollbacks. If elected to the General Assembly, I will utilize my position to champion state-level protections. My priorities will include:

- Expanding anti-discrimination laws.
- Funding sanctuary policies for schools.
- Resisting federal overreach through strategic resolutions and alliances with

I will prioritize legislation that safeguards educators' rights to teach inclusive curricula and provides robust support for marginalized students. I am committed to collaborating with the Maryland State Education Association (MSEA) to monitor and counter threats, ensuring Maryland continues to set a standard for equity.

8. Mental and behavioral health continue to be a serious issue for students and educators. Research shows that an increase in mental health supports for students results in better academic performance, better attendance, and reduced disciplinary issues. How do you believe we can increase mental health supports for school populations, including educators?

We can increase mental health supports by fully funding the Blueprint's community school model, which integrates counselors, therapists, and wellness programs into schools. Specifically, I advocate for hiring more school-based mental health professionals, providing stipends for educator training in trauma-informed practices, and expanding telehealth access in rural areas like St. Mary's County. Partnerships with local health departments and nonprofits can offer on-site services, while state grants could fund employee assistance programs for educators. Success would be measured by improved attendance, reduced referrals, and anonymous surveys, ensuring supports address burnout and stigma for all.

9. Safe and affordable housing is necessary for students and educators to succeed. What is your position on affordable housing and how it relates to education?

Expanding affordable housing is a critical priority, as it directly impacts educational success. When students have stable homes, absenteeism decreases, and their ability to focus improves. I believe that affordable housing allows educators to live within the communities they serve without undue financial stress. In St. Mary's County, rising housing costs—driven by military growth—require specific action.

I would champion policies such as:

- Inclusionary zoning.
- Tax incentives for developers.
- Increased funding for vital programs like the Maryland Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

To connect housing with education, I would advocate for integrating housing stability into the Blueprint's wraparound services. This would be achieved through school-community partnerships that prioritize access to housing for low-income families and educators, ultimately boosting academic outcomes.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Background Points

- MSEA believes any education dollars spent outside of improving public schools makes it harder to achieve the progress necessary to provide a world-class education for every student. The vast majority of students in Maryland are served by the public schools.
- Private school funding for programs in the budget such as textbooks, technology, school construction, and vouchers reduce the state's General Fund while subsidizing the cost of private education. Data from the first few years of the BOOST program indicate that most voucher recipients already attended and paid for private school before receiving the voucher.
- The Maryland State Department of Education requires a certificate of approval or registration for private schools; it does not accredit or license them. Private schools do not have to report or administer teacher qualifications, class sizes, adherence to College and Career Readiness Standards, student retention rates, graduation rates, demographics, or discipline or suspension policies. Without these measures, it is impossible to effectively evaluate the programs funneling public tax dollars to private schools.

10. How will you address state aid for private and religious schools through the nonpublic school textbook, technology, school construction, and voucher programs?

- Increase funding for private schools
- Maintain funding at current levels for private schools
- Decrease funding for private schools
- Eliminate funding for private schools

Additional Comments: I'd prefer to maintain funding for private schools at current levels to preserve educational options for low-income families through programs like BOOST vouchers and secular textbook/technology aid, avoiding disruptions for those who depend on them. However, our primary focus must remain on bolstering public education—serving over 90% of Maryland students—by advancing the Blueprint for Maryland's Future to enhance teacher support, cut class sizes, and upgrade facilities in areas like St. Mary's County. While I won't oppose private aid outright, as it complements choice, I'm eager to engage in ongoing dialogue with stakeholders, including MSEA and EASMC, to refine these programs based on data, accountability, and equity to deliver optimal taxpayer value.

11. Do you support requiring any school (public or private) that receives public funding to adhere to policies regarding antidiscrimination, student achievement standards, school safety and discipline standards, certified teachers, employee protections, and student assessments?

- Support
 Oppose

Additional Comments: I strongly advocate for requiring all schools that receive public funds—whether public or private—to meet the same rigorous standards. These standards should cover: anti-discrimination policies, demonstrable student achievement, comprehensive safety and discipline protocols, certified teachers, adequate employee protections, and standardized assessments. Existing public school initiatives, such as crisis lifelines and the Lifesaver School CPR Training, illustrate the effectiveness of these rules. Applying these same high standards to private programs ensures that every taxpayer dollar is used effectively to improve student outcomes, without detracting from the core goals of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

HEALTHY AND SAFE LEARNING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENTS

Background Points

- MSEA supports funding for school construction and renovation necessary to ensure a high-quality teaching and learning environment, including construction to reduce class size and appropriate heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems. MSEA supports legislation establishing and funding air quality and climatization assurance programs within the school construction and renovation programs, and legislation requiring the construction and maintenance of secure facilities to protect the health and safety of education employees in the performance of their duties.
- According to the Maryland Department of Labor, prevailing wage is defined as, "The hourly wage, usually benefits and overtime, normally paid to the majority of workers, laborers, and mechanics within a particular area." Prevailing wages are established by regulatory agencies, such as government, for each public works trade and occupation, as well as by State Departments of Labor or their equals. Prevailing wage laws address shortages in skilled labor workforce by increasing apprenticeship opportunities, reducing injury rates, and increasing worker productivity. Because they ensure a stable, well-qualified workforce, prevailing wage laws produce good value for taxpayers.

12. How would you use your position in the General Assembly to make a difference in supporting a healthy working and learning environment for educators and students?

I would sponsor and support legislation to modernize school infrastructure, including air-quality improvements and green-building standards, drawing on my experience in St. Mary's County Public Schools. I'd advocate for reduced class sizes, anti-bullying programs, and wellness initiatives under the Blueprint. Collaborating with MSEA, I'd push for educator input on safety protocols and funding for violence prevention, measuring impact through health audits and feedback surveys to create environments where everyone thrives.

13. Do you support or oppose protecting Maryland's existing prevailing wage requirements for school construction projects?

- Support
 Oppose

Additional Comments: Prevailing wages ensure quality work, fair pay for skilled trades, and economic benefits for local communities like St. Mary's County, supporting our military and rural workforce.

RACIAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Background Points

- Maryland and U.S. history are far more diverse than is generally reflected in the content and courses currently taught in our public schools. Far too many Marylanders can progress through their formal primary and secondary education and rarely, if ever, see themselves reflected in the content they are learning or hear about themselves in the stories they read and are told. This lack of inclusivity negatively impacts not only our students' ownership of and agency in their learning, but it also adversely impacts their overall engagement in their learning. Unfortunately Maryland is no stranger to the politicized attacks from extremist activists seeking to ban books and deny students access to resources.
- MSEA is committed to developing critical thinking skills in our students because we know that they enable them to better understand the problems our society faces and to develop collective solutions. To that end, we are abundantly clear that truth and honesty are fundamental components of teaching and learning, as are academic integrity and professional responsibility. Our essential mission is to prepare our students for college, career, and life and to play an active role in our democracy.

14. To encourage critical thinking within our classrooms, we believe educators should have professional autonomy on how to implement curriculum to meet the needs of our students. Do you support or oppose this position?

- Support
 Oppose

Additional Comments: As a former educator, I believe in empowering professionals to thoughtfully adapt curricula and encourage critical thinking, free from political intervention.

15. What specific policy goals and objectives will you pursue aimed at addressing racial and social justice?

My goals include: (1) Advancing equitable school funding to close racial achievement gaps; (2) Supporting restorative justice programs in schools to reduce disciplinary disparities; (3) Advocating for inclusive curricula that reflect diverse histories; and (4) Partnering with communities for anti-bias training for educators. My objectives involve measurable reductions in suspension rates for marginalized students and increased diversity in teaching staff, achieved through targeted legislation and Blueprint enhancements.

CHARTER SCHOOLS

Background Points

- MSEA supports Maryland's current charter school law. It protects high standards, the collective bargaining rights of employees, and the local autonomy and needs of a school system. The law also provides flexibility for charter providers and employees to reach agreements outside of a collective bargaining agreement that allow the school to meet the needs of its mission and students. This combination of protections and flexibility makes Maryland's charter school law the best in the nation.
- Studies have consistently shown that although some charter schools may do well, on average, most perform about the same as or worse than traditional public schools.
- In past legislative sessions, charter advocates have championed legislation that would undermine local control of schools, including creating a 25th school district, lowering standards and accountability, and circumventing certification requirements and collective bargaining rights. Our highly ranked schools depend on keeping our standards high and our charter school law strong. MSEA believes it is necessary to continue to reject efforts to overhaul a law that works and meets the needs of students, parents, school employees, school districts, and our state.

16. MSEA supports public charter schools that are under the control of local school boards, require making enrollment open to all students, require the hiring of certificated teachers, are held to the identical high standards as traditional schools, and protect collective bargaining rights of employees hired at the school. Do you support or oppose MSEA's policy statement with regards to charter schools?

- Support
 Oppose

Additional Comments: I strongly support MSEA's policy statement on public charter schools. Charter schools must remain under local school board control, keep enrollment open to all students, hire certificated teachers, meet the same high academic and safety standards as traditional public schools, and fully protect their employees' collective bargaining rights. I believe that this framework ensures all charters — like Chesapeake Public Charter School right here in St. Mary's County — function as true public schools that expand opportunity. I'm open to collaborating with MSEA and St. Mary's County families to uphold these standards and keep every public dollar working for all our students.

RETIREMENT SECURITY

Background Points

- MSEA believes that guaranteeing adequate income upon retirement, which is best accomplished through defined benefit plans, serves the interests of public education and all education employees by enhancing recruitment efforts, improving retention rates, and creating a high-quality public education system. MSEA also believes that state and local employers are obligated to fund the pension system sufficiently to provide a guaranteed adequate income at retirement.

17. What reforms to the pension system do you believe could help attract and retain more educators?

Reforms should prioritize fully funding the Maryland Teachers' Retirement System without cuts, including restoring employer contributions and adding cost-of-living adjustments for long-term retention, especially in rural areas like St. Mary's County, facing educator shortages. To attract younger talent, reduce vesting periods, offer loan forgiveness for service in high-need schools, and enhance portability while preserving strong defined-benefit options. Integrating these with Blueprint for Maryland's Future salary boosts would make careers in education more competitive statewide.

18. Do you support or oppose any action to diminish or threaten pension benefits such as reducing employer contributions or increasing required employee contributions?

- Support
 Oppose

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Background Points

- MSEA supports efforts to protect and enhance the state's collective bargaining laws.
- Collective bargaining is the negotiation of a contract—including wages, salary scales, benefits, and working conditions—between employers and employees. The items agreed to in a ratified collective bargaining agreement apply to all employees in a bargaining unit, providing a benefit to employees and employers in not having to negotiate thousands of individual contracts.
- MSEA opposes right to work laws. Such laws restrict freedom of association and weaken organized labor in Maryland. The strength of organized labor is critical to protecting workers, ensuring quality, and maintaining fairness, safety, and competitive wages in the workplace.

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

- Support
 Oppose

20. Please indicate your support or opposition for these proposals to expand collective bargaining rights for educators:

- Making the right to strike for public employees, including educators, legal in Maryland.
 Support
 Oppose
- Giving educators the right to negotiate over class size.
 Support
 Oppose
- Giving employees at 4-year public institutions of higher education the right to collectively bargain.
 Support
 Oppose
- Enacting arbitration reform through binding interest arbitration so state employees have efficient and reliable dispute resolution process when collective bargaining negotiations reach impasse
 Support
 Oppose

TAX POLICY

Background Points

- MSEA supports a revenue structure that will provide a predictable, reliable, progressive, and stable source of sustained funding for education. MSEA is a partner in a broad coalition of advocates that support a balanced approach toward solving budget problems by meeting the needs and services of the public with adequate resources.
- MSEA supports an equitable means of maintaining and restoring revenue or of raising and obtaining a fair share of additional revenues that directly or indirectly benefit public education at all levels. Further, MSEA opposes any taxing or spending limitations that directly or indirectly have an adverse effect on public education.

21. Do you support or oppose a balanced approach toward solving budget problems and ensuring adequate resources for funding education such as updating and revising the state income tax structure, broadening the state sales tax, and closing corporate tax loopholes?

- Support
 Oppose

Additional Comments: A progressive, fair tax system ensures sustainable education funding without overburdening working families.

22. Please discuss how you would update the tax code to promote fairness and equity.

My approach to tax policy centers on fairness and investment. I would push for a progressive income tax structure, eliminating loopholes that benefit high-income individuals and large corporations, and expanding tax credits for lower-income families. Furthermore, to generate the necessary revenue for education and infrastructure, I support broadening the sales tax to include services while carefully exempting essential goods, a measure that promotes equity without adversely affecting lower-income households.

23. Please discuss any ideas you have for giving local governments more flexibility in how they can raise revenue to fund services like public schools.

To enhance flexibility, I'd support allowing counties like St. Mary's to impose local option taxes (e.g., on tourism or development impact fees) with voter approval, while providing state matching grants. Streamlining property tax adjustments tied to education needs and enabling public-private partnerships for school funding would empower locals without state mandates, ensuring revenues directly support public schools.

