



2026 Board of County Commissioners  
Candidate Questionnaire

CANDIDATE: Eric Colvin

OFFICE SOUGHT: [REDACTED]

CAMPAIGN ADDRESS: [REDACTED]

PHONE NUMBER(S): [REDACTED]

CAMPAIGN EMAIL: [REDACTED]

CAMPAIGN WEBSITE: www.VoteColvin.com

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

CANDIDATE SIGNATURE: Eric Colvin DATE SUBMITTED: 3/13/2026

Candidates: To be considered for a recommendation, you must indicate your response to each of the questions. You may use more space than is provided to elaborate on your answers and provide clarification, explanation, and other context, but please be certain to clearly indicate the questions(s) to which you refer. Please return your completed and signed questionnaire to EASMC.

## **Education Funding and Local Budgets:**

1. Do you commit to prioritizing public education funding in future county budgets? What are your top three budget priorities for the public school system?

St. Mary's County Public Schools make up the largest single portion of the St. Mary's County budget, and I have prioritized it in my budget deliberations through maintaining strong lines of communication and advocating for moving SMCPS forward in the budget timeline instead of saving the school budget for the last step in our budget process. Working with this current board of commissioners, I have helped to ensure that the requirements of the Blueprint for Education have been met at the local level in regards to funding for the Board of Education.

2. How do you plan to fund public school priorities? What are your thoughts on the current county tax and revenue structure and any actions you would take to update the tax code to promote fairness and equity?

My plan is to work, as a board, with the Board of Education to identify the necessary resources for the requirements for our school system. I am proud that we have been able to maintain one of the lowest property tax amounts in the entire state. I do not believe that I have ever met anyone who enjoys paying taxes. Unfortunately, taxes are required in order to provide the services that our society needs to exist. Lower taxes help businesses to start, grow, and flourish, which decreases unemployment. Lower taxes help to make home ownership more attainable, making it easier to recruit new educators. Raising property taxes and transfer fees would provide more money that could be allocated to the school system, but it would also disproportionately hurt lower income families and make it unattractive for entry-level educators to move to the area. Everything is a balance, and determining proper balance is key to being County Commissioner. Determining the proper balance is a difficult task, but it is absolutely mandatory for the continued growth and success of St. Mary's County.

3. How would you utilize your budget authority to address shortfalls facing our schools if the state or federal government reduces their commitment(s)?

This is a very real concern that we have already seen materialize as the state pushes costs down to the counties, including Teacher Pension costs. Every year is its own individual budget puzzle, and I will approach each year as it comes. No

accurate promises can be made at this time, and anyone who is making promises is not being honest with themselves.

4. In many schools, educators are dealing with high class sizes and caseloads. How will you help address critical concerns with educator recruitment and retention in order to ensure we can increase staffing to reduce class sizes and caseloads?

Educator recruitment and retention is a responsibility of the Board of Education, and I will maintain open communication throughout the budget process with BoE members to ensure that funding is used as efficiently and effectively as possible. I have been fortunate the past few years to be able to attend “New Teacher Orientation” before the start of the school year and address our newly hired educators on behalf of the Board of Commissioners. I make a point to find out where they are coming to our school system from and thank them for the work they are doing. I also encourage them to stay invested in our future, but ignore the unhelpful rhetoric that sometimes surrounds our budget process.

5. Do you commit to honoring the role of your elected body in upholding the policy and funding mandates associated with the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future?

\_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

How can you help with the shortfall?

The implementation of the policies and funding mandates associated with the Blueprint are the responsibility of the Board of Education. I will continue to work with the Board of Education to ensure I understand the challenges that these policies place on educators. The current Board of Commissioners has passed budgets that have allowed St. Mary’s County to exceed our Blueprint funding requirements, but the real test will be the State budget next Fiscal Year when the requirements at the state level are due.

6. Please discuss your philosophy related to charter schools. Do you believe they should be expanded in our county public school structure?

Our Chesapeake Public Charter School does a wonderful job educating our children. At this time there is not a need for additional schools to be added to our school system.

7. How will your budget address increased needs for mental health supports for students and educators in our community, where mental health access is so limited?

The budget we build is only able to fund the requests that we receive. The Board of Education is responsible for managing the school system. We have provided support for the School Based Health Centers, but I recognize that we have a mental health provider shortage, and that is not an issue isolated to St. Mary's County. Several years ago we had a delegation visit our county from our sister county in Estonia, and one of the issues they are struggling with is the same mental health supports for students, especially coming out of the COVID pandemic.

8. What is your opinion on local efforts to create and support community schools?

Our schools are incredible places of education and community—they are the hubs of community, even more so because of COVID. School might be the only place where a child receives a hot meal (or any meal). Our schools have amazing community partnerships, and I have supported the school based health centers to provide needed medical services. My concern with the community school concept is the potential additional burden placed on educators.

9. SMCPS is in a period of enrollment decline. Our newest building is 10 years old. What should influence any decisions to redistrict?

Redistricting is a decision that needs to be made by the elected Board of Education, not the County Commissioners. Redistricting should help to even out enrollment between schools to ensure our resources are used most efficiently.

**Public Funding for Private Schools:**

10. Do you support or oppose allocating public funding to non-public school students through voucher programs?

\_\_\_\_\_ SUPPORT \_\_\_\_\_ OPPOSE

Additional comments:

I do not support the county creating a voucher program because that is not a fiscally responsible decision for our local government budget. Parents want the best education possible for their children, but this is not a local issue, it is a state or federal issue.

11. Do you support or oppose allowing non-public school students to participate in public school extracurricular activities (sports, clubs, etc.)?

\_\_\_\_\_ SUPPORT \_\_\_\_\_ OPPOSE

Additional comments:

I support the idea of allowing non-public school students to participate in public school extracurricular activities, as long as they meet the requirements of the school system. Their families pay the same taxes to fund our school system and allowing them to participate is in the best interest of the children.

**Collective Bargaining:**

12. Do you support or oppose school employees gaining the right to strike?

\_\_\_\_\_ SUPPORT \_\_\_\_\_ OPPOSE

Additional comments:

I am not in favor of our school employees striking. Education is a fundamental service that is relied upon by students and families. Working to ensure effective communication and adequate resources should prevent the need/desire to strike.

13. What is your understanding of the nature of the relationship between the Board of Education, Superintendent, county government, and union as it relates to negotiations, budget development, and administration of schools? How do you see yourself utilizing the power of your office in working within this structure?

My understanding is that EASMC negotiates their contract with the Board of Education and Superintendent with no input or participation from the county government. The Superintendent prepares the school system budget, and the Board of Education approves it and provides it to the County Commissioners. The County Commissioners allocate the funding for the budget. Individually I work to maintain communication with different parties throughout the budget process.

14. Do you commit to meeting with union leadership to talk about the needs facing our schools (including salary and staffing levels) and the revenue or other budget actions necessary to meet those needs?

\_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

Additional comments:

Yes, I have a proven track record of meeting and keeping communication open between all parties.

**Racial and Social Justice:**

15. EASMC supports honesty in education. 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? How would you respond to political pressure threatening that professional autonomy?

\_\_\_\_\_ SUPPORT \_\_\_\_\_ OPPOSE

Additional comments:

I fully support teaching the truth and I agree that critical thinking is one of the most important skills that our students need to learn but I believe that educators should hold to the approved curriculum in their teaching. Parents should feel confident that they know what their children are being taught.

16. Do you support or oppose a curriculum that reflects the perspective and background of diverse learners? How would you respond to political pressure requesting changes to content and curriculum?

\_\_\_\_\_

SUPPORT

\_\_\_\_\_

OPPOSE

Additional comments:

It is not the role of the County Commissioners to set curriculum; that falls to the Board of Education and the State. That being said, I believe a wide-ranging education is a smart education policy.

17. What specific policy goals and objectives will you pursue aimed at addressing racial and social justice, including support of diversity, equity, and inclusion for all students and providing equitable access, opportunities, resources, and supports?

All children have the right to a public education. The specific policies of the school system are the responsibility of the elected Board of Education members. Outside of education, I have supported policies that support at risk students, such as opposing rate increases for before/after school care.

18. Immigration enforcement is a matter of federal jurisdiction. What is your position on how local law enforcement should interact with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement? And how will you work to ensure school grounds, bus stops, and other school spaces are safe havens against immigration enforcement actions?

Our Sheriff is a duly elected position and therefore is empowered to determine law enforcement policies at the local level. The commissioners have no role in this issue other than to provide the needed support/resources to our local law enforcement and school system.

19. Stable, safe, and affordable housing is necessary for all students to be able to succeed in school and in the recruitment of educators, including education support professionals, to live in the communities they serve. How do you plan to address the housing crisis in the county?

It is important to recognize that the housing crisis is not isolated to St. Mary's County—it is across the state and the nation. There are a variety of reasons that are outside of our local control; we cannot fix national problems at a local level. There are, however, some steps that we can take. Currently we are working through our revision of the Comprehensive Plan, and the follow on to that will be an update to the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance. These are critical updates

that will shape how our county looks in the future, including with housing. There has been substantial time and resources dedicated by county government to ensure as much community input as possible. We must get this right. Additionally, I have supported policies that do directly impact the cost of housing locally, such as lowering the Excise Tax that gets added on to the cost of home construction.

**Privatization and Support for Education Support Professionals (ESP's):**

20. Are you in favor of contracting out custodial, cafeteria, and maintenance services rather than have those services provided by the Board of Education employees?

\_\_\_\_\_ SUPPORT \_\_\_\_\_ OPPOSE

Additional comments:

I support the Board of Education in being empowered to make the necessary decisions that best serve our children. The contracting out of support services in the school is a Board of Education decision, not a County Commissioner decision. If they were to take such steps, the Board of Education needs to be careful that the full cost of this transition is taken into account, including established relationships within the school system and the pride/value that employees have in their job that leads to better work performance.

21. Too many ESPs 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

Additional Comments:

Our ESPs provide vital work to ensure our school system is operating. My hope is that they can have strong open dialogue with the Board of Education and receive fair treatment for the work they provide.

22. Please share how you would use your office to help make the ESP Bill of Rights a reality in the county.

Much like I would be upset if the Board of Education tried to influence how county government was operating, I will not overstep into their area of responsibility. I will be happy to have conversations about needs and resources, but I trust that the residents of our county will elect Board of Education members that will serve the will of the people and the good of our students.

## Essay Questions:

A. Why are you running for this position? What personal attributes, characteristics, and experiences make you the right candidate for this position?

I am running for reelection because I believe I can still contribute to our county and want to ensure it remains a great place to live, work, and raise a family. I have served for two terms as a county commissioner, so I have a clear record of transparency and fairness. My day job is as a Financial Analyst at Webster Field, and I believe I bring that expertise to our budget formulation. I strive to hear all sides of an issue and bring balance to decisions that are made. I have a demonstrated commitment to doing the work of being a County Commissioner and I will continue that same level of effort if elected to a third term. Relationships matter and partnerships matter, and my goal is that county government would be a strong and supportive partner to all that we work with.

B. What are the top three things you would like to accomplish in the next four years if you are elected to [county commission/BOE]?

If reelected, I plan to continue to champion transparency and open dialogue, a stable EMS system, and completion of the work of our Comprehensive Plan.

Very early on in my first term I received questions about a vote on bond authority for the county that was not well publicized, and since then I have strived to be transparent in all the actions that this commissioner board has taken. Every single meeting is summarized on my Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/CommissionerColvin/>) and website ([www.VoteColvin.com](http://www.VoteColvin.com)) so that county residents can always know what their local government is doing.

Our volunteer firefighters and EMTs do extraordinary work. They give inordinate amounts of their time and save lives on a daily basis. The COVID crisis exacerbated a growing problem—simply put, the 9-1-1 call volume exceeded what our volunteer rescue squads were able to efficiently and effectively cover. County government hired career EMTs in order to support our volunteer system and ensure that whenever someone calls 9-1-1 an ambulance will be able to get to them. Supporting this system is key to the safety of all of our residents.

Our Comprehensive Plan is in the middle of being revised. Significant resources and time were expended to ensure community input because this important document will lay out the future of our County and what we want to see there. Later this year we will approve the updated version of the Comprehensive Plan, and it will be the responsibility of the next board of County Commissioners to enact that vision through changes to our zoning ordinance. I would like to be part of the team that makes those changes to help us realize the future vision of our home. This impacts a wide range of life, including housing, transportation, schools, businesses, and our beautiful natural resources and environment.

**Additional Information:**

Along with this completed questionnaire, please provide an up-to-date bio or resume as well as a current list of endorsements for this election cycle.