

2026 Board of County Commissioners Candidate Questionnaire

CANDIDATE: Tom Jarboe

OFFICE SOUGHT: SMC Commissioner President

CAMPAIGN ADDRESS: [REDACTED]

PHONE NUMBER(S): [REDACTED]

CAMPAIGN EMAIL: [REDACTED]

CAMPAIGN WEBSITE: jarboeforsmc.com

CANDIDATE SIGNATURE: *Thomas H Jarboe* DATE SUBMITTED: 07 MAR 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.

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.

Education

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?

Yes. The two top budgets in SMC are Education and Policing. Top three budget priorities for Education would be funding the State requirement of Maintenance of Effort, funding for additional paraeducators and funding for teacher pay.

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?

Funding for public school priorities will be negotiated with the Board of Education and align with County resources available. The current BOCC just increased taxes to 3.2. The State would allow up to 3.3 as a maximum but I believe this is a premonition on the State saddling local municipalities / governments with the cost of 100% teachers' retirement costs (SMC is currently at 50%). This really won't allow for additional funding for student programs.

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

The State Board of Education controls a lot of this discussion. Unfunded mandates passed down by the State have to be addressed at the local level. The County would have no choice but to find ways to fill the gap.

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?

This is a BOE issue. The BOCC provides the annual budget to the BOE. It is entirely up to the Superintendent of Schools and the BOE on how that budget is expensed.

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. People have suggested there is up to a \$20M shortfall in our annual public education funding but frankly that is because we are not compensated at the Federal or State level like other urban or poorer counties. Why? Because SMC is one of the wealthiest counties in the State. Our success economically hinders us from bringing in federal or state level funding at many levels. It is true that SMC is the 2nd lowest funded per pupil county in the state. But the BOCC is not a total solution to this gap in funding. The BOCC's responsibility is annually to prepare and endorse a balanced budget to include all County agencies (not just the BOE).

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

I honestly am not familiar enough with the difference between charter schools and public schools in general to comment on this. Perception-wise, it appears that charter schools are for the more gifted students and I would be cautious about expanding an expansion of a separation between charter and standard public schools. The latter would potentially be left behind and a better solution would be ALL public schools are great places to send your kids.

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

Again, the BOCC addresses the overall budget for the BOE. How it is expensed is up to the Superintendent and BOE.

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

Don't understand this question. Of course I support local community schools, both public and private.

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 local issue that is driven by the SMC BOE. There is a common misperception in the community that many of our schools are overcrowded, but by State BOE algorithms they are not. That is actually a State thing, and by the State BOE, the only school that comes close to that is Leonardtown High School. Thus, the SMC BOE has started looking at redistricting between Leonardtown and Chopticon HS.

We don't need (and the State won't support regardless) any more brick and mortar solutions at this time. Doesn't matter if your newest school is 10-years old if you don't have the populace to require a new school to be built.

Public Funding for Private Schools:

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

I would oppose voucher programs, but I support public monies being used to cover public transportation (busing) of private school students.

SUPPORT Additional comments:

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

Support. These are held in taxpayer funded facilities and should be enjoyed by all.

Collective Bargaining:

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

Support. The union exists, and this is their right. Again, this is more of a BOE issue than a BOCC concern.

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?

This is quite simple to describe. Each year, the BOE (led by the Superintendent) prepares an annual budget presented to the BOCC. The BOCC only has one lever in the discussion; support, increase or decrease the budget. The BOCC has no leverage on all the subcomponents of the BOE budget. Once approved, the BOE manages their own budget. This is one of the clear disconnects with the Community. If the BOCC underfunds the requested budget, the Superintendent / BOE can make quite the theatrics out of that decision by stating they will have to cut paraeducators (for example) when they could also cut administrative staff which leads to public outrage, etc.

My goal is to have clear and open discussions with the Superintendent and BOE of County budget ability each year and avoid the public hearing theatrics which are both unnecessary and unhelpful.

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?

Happy to meet appropriately (with the County Public School Superintendent). Not really a BOCC thing.

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?

I certainly support professional autonomy as long as it does not bring in personal opinion. I believe in teaching the curriculum, and students should not know where a teacher falls politically (left or right). Politics do not belong in the classroom. Teach the curriculum and leave personal biases outside the classroom.

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?

Politics do not belong in the classroom. Teach the curriculum and leave personal biases outside the classroom.

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?

This is not a BOCC concern.

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?

ICE is an arm of the Department of Homeland Security. They are implementing federal law in their enforcement of policy. My position is that local law enforcement should 100% support U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The BOCC has no control or influence on school grounds, bus stops and anything school-related. That is a BOE and law enforcement issue.

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?

This is a great question. SMC has a large deficit of affordable housing. We definitely need more of it. This past year, a project that included affordable housing was voted down by the BOCC. I strongly opposed that decision. Politically (and very much a theme pushed by social media) is that affordable housing = increase in crime versus an increase in workforce development housing. I will be a strong advocate for workforce housing.

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?

That is a BOE decision. How would the BOCC have any influence on this?

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?

YES.

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

I wouldn't. Not a role of responsibility for the BOCC. Refer to the BOE.

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 a proud St. Mary's County native, business leader, veteran, and dedicated public servant with a lifelong commitment to strengthening our community. From 2014 to 2018, I served as Commissioner for District 1, working to enhance economic growth, public safety, and local infrastructure.

A recognized leader in business and community service, I was named the St. Mary's County Chamber of Commerce Businessperson of the Year in 2013. My extensive leadership roles include serving as:

- Founder, and President of the Board of Directors for Leadership Southern Maryland
- Chairman of the Board for the St. Mary's County Chamber of Commerce
- Founder of (3) St. Mary's County based defense companies:
- Current CEO of J4 Aviation, which I founded with my three sons.
- Founded Keiyos, LLC., an international trade company.
- Founded Technology Security Associates, Inc. which I grew to \$12m a year.
- Co-Chair of the St. Mary's County Local Emergency Planning Commission
- Board Member of the Southern Maryland Navy Alliance
- Co-Chair of the SMNA BRAC Committee

Beyond leadership in county affairs, I am deeply involved in supporting fellow veterans. I serve as a lead instructor for the Veterans Institute of Procurement (VIP), helping U.S. military veteran entrepreneurs succeed in international business. I also served as counselor for the Wounded Warrior Initiative at Fort Meade. Locally, I

served as Rescue Lieutenant 6 for Valley Lee Volunteer Fire Department and as a volunteer EMT for Company 49 in Ridge.

A veteran of the United States Coast Guard, I have over 35 years of experience in the Department of Defense and international business sectors. I hold a Masters in International Commerce from the University of Maryland and am a Leadership Maryland (2006) graduate.

I have been a steadfast advocate for local airport development, working to attract new businesses, create jobs, and expand opportunities at St. Mary's County Regional Airport, helping to make it a hub for innovation and economic growth.

I believe in smart growth, strong local businesses, and a government that works for the people. With leadership, experience, and deep roots in our community, I am ready to serve St. Mary's County once again.

- B. What are the top three things you would like to accomplish in the next four years if you are elected to county commissioner?
1. Increase in Public-Private partnerships. There are a plethora of opportunities around the County to team with private industry to better our infrastructure and decrease reliance on tax payer dollars.
 2. Provide a strong focus on Economic Development. Huge opportunity for the County with advanced technologies.
 3. Preserve our rural character. Growth where growth makes sense.

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.