



2022 Gubernatorial Candidate Questionnaire

Learning happens everywhere – in classrooms, and beyond the school day.

Greetings Gubernatorial Candidates,

As a broad-based coalition working to expand the quantity and quality of afterschool and summer opportunities available to Maryland's K-12 youth, the Maryland Out of School Time (MOST) Network invites you to answer the attached eight questions about important education policy issues.

We will publish your responses on the MOST Network website, www.mostnetwork.org, and in our e-newsletter, which reaches about 4,000 subscribers statewide. The MOST Network is one of 50 State Afterschool Networks supported by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and serves as the Maryland affiliate of the National Afterschool Association.

Please return your responses by Friday, June 3, 2022, to Ellie Mitchell at emitchell@mostnetwork.org

- Thank you in advance -

Question 1: Maryland has consistently struggled to improve access to afterschool and summer programs despite high demand for such programs among the state's student population. How will your administration improve program availability for those who want to participate?

Background information

- Youth who regularly participate in quality afterschool programs demonstrate gains in reading and math and improve their school attendance, work habits and school performance.¹
- 85% of working parents overwhelmingly support public funding for afterschool programs. They support working families, keep youth safe and help youth learn and grow.²
- The waiting list is long. In Maryland, more than 150,000 youth are enrolled in afterschool programs, but another 280,000 are waiting for an available program.³
- Investing in afterschool is smart. For every public dollar invested in afterschool programs, Maryland sees an estimated return on investment of \$3.36.⁴

¹ Auger, A., Pierce, K. M. and Vandell, D. L. (April, 2013). Participation in Out-of-School Settings and Student Academic and Behavioral Outcomes.

² Kataoka, Sabrina and Deborah L. Vandell. "Quality of Afterschool Activities and Relative Change in Adolescent Functioning Over Two Years." Journal of Applied Developmental Science. VOL 17, ISS 3 (2013): 1-12. Print.

³ Pierce, K. M., Auger, A. and Vandell, D. L. (April, 2013). Narrowing the Achievement Gap: Consistency and Intensity of Structured Activities During Elementary School.

⁴ http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/policyStateFacts.cfm?state_abbr=MD]

Response: I recognize that Maryland's youth spend the majority of their time in school, home, or neighborhoods. My administration will focus on enriching kids' entire quality of life from cradle to career. I am the only gubernatorial candidate in the race that has proposed experiential/case-based learning to be included in our curricula because I believe that it is important for students to connect to real-world experiences and to engage community partners to play an integral role in after-school programs. We will also increase grant funding and tax incentives to organizations that provide after-school programs for students.

Question 2: *Current trends in labor and technology raise serious questions about Maryland's approach to workforce development and skills training.⁵ How would your administration support college and career readiness initiatives and prepare students for life after high school?*

Background Information:

- The appropriate student to counselor ratio of 250 to 1 according to the American School Counselor Association. Maryland has a ratio of 369 to 1 statewide, while Baltimore City has a ratio is 900 to 1. This disparity continues to grow, leaving fewer students with the supports necessary to make informed career decisions.⁶
- Afterschool and summer programs improve students' college and career readiness by offering college visits, teaching marketable skills, assisting them in the education process, and making them more attractive to university admissions offices.⁷

Response: My administration believes that career training starts in our middle and high-school classrooms. In partnership with employers and unions, the Franchot administration will integrate union vocational training and apprenticeship programs into Maryland's public high school system, and pilot fully debt-free paths to a vocation or college degree. We will also guarantee employment in the six-week Conservation Jobs Corp Program for all interested Marylanders under the age of 22, expand the program's purview to include industries of the future, and facilitate placement for participants over the age of 18 in a related field with state or local agencies, or organized labor.

I am also committed to proactively implementing funding streams for Maryland's Historically Black Colleges and Universities and creating partnerships with our private

⁵ Manyika, James, and Kevin Sneider. "Ai, Automation, and the Future of Work: Ten Things to Solve For." *McKinsey & Company*, McKinsey & Company, 9 Sept. 2021,

<https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/ai-automation-and-the-future-of-work-ten-things-to-solve-for>.

⁶ Richman, Talia. "Baltimore sees declines in school counselor positions." *Baltimore Sun*, March 2, 2018. <https://www.baltimoresun.com/education/bs-md-ci-sun-investigates-school-counselors-20180301-story.html>. Accessed online Nov. 21, 2020.

⁷ Brand, Betsy, Valiant Andrew. "The Potential of Career and College Readiness Exploration in Afterschool Programs." *Expanded Minds and Opportunities: Leveraging the Power of Afterschool and Summer Learning for Student Success*, 2013, https://www.expandinglearning.org/sites/default/files/em_articles/1_potentialofcareerandcollege.pdf. Accessed online on Nov 21, 2020

and public sectors to create more financially competitive job opportunities for students during college and upon graduation.

Marylanders seeking new career opportunities will be eligible to enroll in the intensive multi-month program, and those exiting the criminal justice system will be offered this program in concert with their release. Facilities associated with the program will be paid for through municipal bonds and partnerships with the federal government, private sector, and unions.

Question 3: STEM fields represent a significant proportion of the state's economic growth potential. How would your administration prioritize science and technology related education programs in Maryland?

Background Information:

- STEM fields have been an engine for economic growth in the state for decades. Today, jobs in engineering, computer science, IT, and medicine are set to grow dramatically across the mid-Atlantic region. These jobs typically require formal education and training but provide high salaries and benefits to those who obtain them.⁸
- Equity problems persist in STEM disciplines. Women, as well as black and Hispanic graduates have historically been underrepresented in science and technology-related professions.⁹ Engaging these students through expanded learning opportunities at an early age is an effective way to bridge this gap.
- Maryland's longstanding deficit in afterschool and summer programs has been a hinderance to STEM learning. While fundamental concepts in science and math are taught in Maryland public schools. Students learning more complex trades like coding and robotics benefit from the hands-on experiences and peer relationships that expanded learning programs provide.¹⁰

Response: STEM/STEAM programs will be a key component in our experiential learning model to ensure that our students are fully equipped to engage our modern economy. One of the reasons I chose my running mate, Monique Anderson-Walker, is because she has experience implementing STEM/STEAM programs in schools. During her time on the Council, she partnered with the Global Air Drone Academy to establish the S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) Camp, a free drone program in which the students learn the rules of drone construction, piloting, and coding. These skills pair students with an opportunity to gain drone pilot licenses. Joint Base Andrews Command and the Intelligence Community (IC) have supported the program with access to Joint Base Andrews SPARKX Center, a renowned incubator, as well as IC-led seminars. This outstanding coalition also provides internship and career

⁸ Eichensehr, Morgan. "Baltimore Ranks in Top 10 for 'STEM Friendly' Metro Areas." *Bizjournals.com*, Baltimore Business Journal, 10 Jan. 2018, <https://www.bizjournals.com/baltimore/news/2018/01/10/baltimore-ranks-in-top-10-for-stem-friendly-metro.html>.

⁹ Kennedy, Brian, et al. "6 Facts about America's STEM Workforce and Those Training for It." *Pew Research Center*, Pew Research Center, 14 Apr. 2021, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/04/14/6-facts-about-americas-stem-workforce-and-those-training-for-it/>.

¹⁰ "OST STEM Professional Development." *Click2Science*, The Noyce Foundation, <http://www.click2sciencepd.org/ost-stem-pd>.

opportunities for teens in District 8. My administration will work with our Secretary of Education, Secretary of Diversity Equity and Inclusion, local government, and community organizations to implement a similar program statewide. This initiative will be in coordination with our 100,000 jobs initiative and our [Conservation Jobs Corps Program](#) which will guarantee employment in the six-week for all interested Marylanders under the age of 22, and facilitate placement for participants over the age of 18 in a family-supporting job in an industry of the future.

Question 4: *The Blueprint for Maryland's Future* was the state's most significant investment in education in over a decade, yet its full implementation has remained a contentious issue between the General Assembly and the Hogan administration. As governor, would you see the Blueprint fully implemented? How would you like to see the program expanded in your first term?

Background Information:

- The Blueprint is designed to target students with the greatest need by using the number of students receiving Free and Reduced Meals at a given school as a metric for determining grant funding allocations. It also provides support for other worthwhile education initiatives including community schools, career and college readiness programs, expanded pre-K access, and the recruitment of high-quality teachers.¹¹
- The Blueprint for Maryland's Future, which passed the General Assembly through a veto override, was delayed in its implementation when the Hogan administration shortchanged the state's annual education budget¹² and rejected the initial list nominees for the Accountability and Implementation board appointed by the state legislature.¹³

Response: I will fund and implement Kirwan as passed. My attempts to seek clarity on its long-term funding were based on my first-hand experience seeing the type of budgeting practices that required the creation of an education lockbox. I have seen the impacts of education reform legislation from Thorton and now Kirwan. These commissions were good starting points, and I support outcomes such as universal Pre-K from the Kirwan Commission. Yet, as we look to implement a bold vision for the State by introducing policies such as a case-based learning model, and reducing standardized testing so students and teachers are empowered, we need sustainable funding and curriculum reform to prepare our students to engage in an evolving society. I want us to go beyond the Kirwan Commission by ensuring that we develop an education blueprint that does not only solve temporary challenges but creates a pathway for sustainable educational development for our students."

¹¹ "Overview: The Blueprint for Maryland's Future." *Maryland State Department of Education*, <https://marylandpublicschools.org/Blueprint/Pages/Overview.aspx>.

¹² Shwe February 18, Elizabeth. "Mandate Debate: Prince George's, Baltimore Lawmakers Press for Education Funding Hogan Left out of Budget." *Maryland Matters*, 18 Feb. 2022, <https://www.marylandmatters.org/2022/02/18/mandate-debate-prince-georges-baltimore-lawmakers-press-for-education-funding-hogan-left-out-of-budget/>.

¹³ Shwe, Elizabeth. "Hogan Makes Deadline for Naming Members to Education Reform Oversight Panel." *Maryland Matters*, 1 Oct. 2021, <https://www.marylandmatters.org/2021/10/01/hogan-makes-deadline-for-naming-members-to-education-reform-oversight-panel/>.

Question 5: How will you support the expansion of the Community School Strategy in the state of Maryland?

Background Information:

- Community schools help alleviate the effects of concentrated poverty in the state's communities by providing food and sanitation services to students, and by fostering partnerships with local organizations to establish free and low-cost afterschool and summer programs.¹⁴
- Community schools are particularly effective in low-income neighborhoods in cities and rural where social services and basic amenities can be few and far between.¹⁵ These institutions become community hubs that cater not only to the needs of students, but their families as well.
- The Blueprint for Maryland's Future created pathways for schools across the state to access funding to implement the community school strategy. Nearly 300 community schools currently exist in Maryland, with dozens more poised to adopt the strategy over the next ten years.

Response: My administration will support the Community Schools Strategy by ensuring they are not only properly funded, but also have the personnel to meet community needs. I understand how vital community school coordinations are to engaging families and communities in the learning environment, and creating opportunities by doing so. Our schools are often a key opportunity to deliver resources and educate families on opportunities, and I will ensure we have staff on the ground that are able to do so.

Question 6: Our partners have long advocated for the creation of a statewide office to coordinate and direct Expanded Learning initiatives in Maryland. Would your administration approve of an "Director (or assistant superintendent) of Expanded Learning" role and provide them with the resources necessary to promote and expand learning experiences outside of traditional school hours?

Background Information:

- Building strong partnerships between community organizations and school districts can be challenging, often due to weak lines of communication between the two parties and low levels of system-wide organization.¹⁶ A Director of Expanded Learning can alleviate this by promoting a comprehensive state-level strategy for OST programs, building personal relationships with relevant stakeholders, and guiding the utilization of federal funding.
- Expanded Learning coordinators have proven to be effective both at the local level and in other states in the US. In Maryland, the Director of Community Schools has been an effective model for the implementation of statewide education initiatives. Offices like these act as intermediaries between schools, education officials, and program providers to expand the

¹⁴ Partnership for the Future of Learning, *The Community Schools Playbook*, 2017

¹⁵ Williams, Doris Terry. Center for American Progress, *The Rural Solution: How Community Schools Can Reinvigorate Rural Education*. September 2010

¹⁶ Anthony, Kenneth and Morra, Joseph, "Creating Holistic Partnerships Between School and Afterschool," *Institute of Education Sciences*, Fall 2016

quantity and quality of OST programming in communities across the country.¹⁷

Response: Yes, my administration believes that success does not happen in silos. We will create a center of excellence in our State's government to restore Marylanders' faith in our ability to meet the challenges we face, and we will create the necessary agencies/roles and programs to achieve our vision. I would explore the creation of an Expanded Learning Task Force to foster collaboration, and accountability and support the implementation. The lead on the task force would work hand-in-hand to help us not only achieve our educational outcome goals but will have a seat at the table when it comes to developing and deploying our public safety and economic development initiatives.

Question 7: Parents and educators are currently grappling with shifting cultural attitudes towards social justice and identity. In recent months, these debates have spilled into school board meetings across the country. What role, if any, would your administration play in shaping policy around discussions of race, gender, sexual orientation, and equity in the classroom?

Background Information:

- State governments in Florida, Texas, and elsewhere have imposed limitations on content related to race, gender, and sexual orientation in school curricula in recent months, sparking controversy over the role of government and families in moderating classroom discussions on these subjects.¹⁸ At times, these laws have seen specific books and authors banned from lesson plans altogether.
- There is strong evidence to suggest that a diverse teaching workforce improves student performance and satisfaction, particularly when students share aspects of their identity with their teachers.¹⁹

Response: Our classrooms and curricula will promote intellectual diversity and be reflective of our society. We have pledged to appoint a Secretary of Diversity Equity and Inclusion who will be responsible for working with our Secretary of Education, local government, parents, and educational professionals to help us achieve this goal by publicly issuing a report outlining priority action items for the administration. I have a bedrock commitment to ensuring our classrooms are welcoming to all students, and provide them the confidence and encouragement they need to thrive for a lifetime.

¹⁷ "About Expanded Learning in California." *California AfterSchool Network*, 8 Nov. 2011, <https://www.afterschoolnetwork.org/splash-feature/about-expanded-learning-california-0>.

¹⁸ Greene, Peter. "Not Just Florida. How 'Don't Say Gay' Legislation Compares in Other States." *Forbes*, Forbes Magazine, 18 Apr. 2022, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/petergreene/2022/04/14/not-just-florida-how-dont-say-gay-legislation-compares-in-other-states/?sh=52b3381d7678>.

¹⁹ Redding, Christopher. "A Teacher like Me: A Review of the Effect of Student-Teacher Racial/Ethnic Matching on Teacher Perceptions of Students and Student Academic and Behavioral Outcomes." *Review of Educational Research*, vol. 89, no. 4, 2019, pp. 499-535., <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654319853545>.

Question 8: What are your thoughts regarding the utilization of community and school-based mentoring programs to provide much-needed support to Maryland Public School students?

Background Information:

- With a mentor, opportunity youth are 52% less likely than their peers to skip a day of school, 55% more likely to be enrolled in college, 46% less likely than their peers to start using drugs and 78% more likely to volunteer regularly in their communities.²⁰
- Mentoring particularly skills-based mentoring and apprenticeship programs, prepares our future workforce by exposing young people the world and developing their life skills and vocational skills which are critical to success in today's economy.²¹

Response: I am the only candidate that has pledged to create a groundbreaking, statewide mentorship program that seeks to connect our seniors with opportunities to support early childhood and elementary school programming, as well as career mentorship for high school students and young adults. This will be an investment in community building that will improve outcomes for our youth and quality of life for seniors. I will also propose a tax incentive for seniors to be applied to retiree income, in order to encourage participation.

By increasing mentorship participation, this program will ensure that participating students have access to multiple mentors.

The research about the power of mentorship is clear. Mentees gain valuable insight and knowledge and go on to perform better both in and out of school. Senior citizens participating in mentorship programs reduce loneliness and improve their quality of life, reduce ageism in society, and gain opportunities to learn from their mentees as well.

²⁰ MENTORING: A CRITICAL SUPPORT STRATEGY FOR YOUTH CAREER ENGAGEMENT AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:
<https://www.mentoring.org/new-site/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Career.pdf>

²¹ Ibid