

Washington County Teachers Association  
Washington County Educational Support Personnel

2018 Board of County Commissioners  
Candidate Questionnaire

CANDIDATE: BRIAN BEALL

OFFICE SOUGHT: COUNTY COMMISSIONER

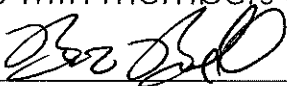
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I confirm that the responses provided here are my official positions in seeking local office and I understand that WCTA reserves the right to share my responses with members and interested parties.

CANDIDATE SIGNATURE:  DATE SUBMITTED: 8/17/18

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 questions(s) to which you refer. Please return your completed and signed questionnaire to WCTA.

## Education Funding

### Background Points

- In 2002, lawmakers passed the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act (also known as the Thornton Plan) based on the recommendations of the Thornton Commission. While this increased investment has helped Maryland's public schools and students achieve outstanding results and develop a reputation as a national leader, many unmet needs remain.
- The cost of educating students continues to increase. Over the last 10 years, Maryland has seen an increase in our Title I student population of 129% and limited English proficiency students of 88%. With year-to-year increases in special education needs, it is clear that the changing student population is a significant driver of costs.
- Maryland had the best schools in the nation for five years in a row from 2009 to 2013, according to *Education Week*. In 2016, *Ed Week* ranked Maryland fifth in the nation. Maryland now ranks 2nd in AP performance (2017)—after leading the nation for ten consecutive years—with 30.4 percent of Maryland graduates scoring a 3 or better on AP assessments. And Maryland's graduation rate is at 87 percent—the highest ever in the state and 3.8 percent higher than the national graduation rate.
- There is a critical need for improvement in closing education gaps, expanding programs and services, community schools, and improving student achievement.
- The governor will have a significant impact on the future funding and success of Maryland schools. Maryland's median incomes are the highest in the nation, but school spending is the 10th highest among the states and 16th highest when adjusted for regional cost differences. According to consultants hired by MSDE, Maryland schools are now underfunded by nearly \$3 billion annually. That means each of our schools, on average, is underfunded by more than \$2 million every year.
- MSEA supports legislation to update our school funding formula and policies to ensure adequate and equitable state and local education funding. Our priorities include elevating the respect and support for Maryland's educators with higher salaries and greater career opportunities, and addressing Maryland's economic inequality in our schools with programs to target concentrated poverty.

1. 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.

CRITICAL NEEDS MUST BE ADDRESSED FIRST. CLASS SIZES, POOR BUILDING CONDITIONS, AND SECURITY. COUNTY FUNDING SHOULD NOT BE HELD FLAT AND THE "LOW EFFORT" DESIGNATION MUST END. WCBOE AND WCTA OFFICIALS SHOULD MEET QUARTERLY TO ASSESS CONDITIONS AND EXECUTE CHANGES WHEN NEEDED.

2. There is considerable room for improvement in addressing educator recruitment and retention. Across the state, educator salaries have been relatively flat for the last eight years. Pension benefits have been reduced but employee contributions have increased. Class sizes will increase as a result of cost-cutting measures and/or due to hiring freezes, layoffs, and retirements. Support personnel positions have been eliminated. How will you address critical concerns with educator recruitment and retention?

I WOULD GATHER ALL RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS TO ADDRESS THIS ISSUE AND PRESS FOR CONTINUED OR EXPANDED FUNDING FROM COUNTY GOVERNMENTS TO MAXIMIZE SALARIES TO REMAIN COMPETITIVE WITH OTHER JURISDICTIONS. MINIMIZING CLASS SIZES THROUGH INCREASED TEACHER HIRING IS NEEDED AND THAT GOES HAND IN HAND WITH PROMOTING WCPS AS A PROGRESSIVE, FORWARD LOOKING, AND WELL FUNDED ORGANIZATION.

3. Do you support or oppose Maryland's maintenance of effort law that requires local jurisdictions to fund at least the same per pupil allocation in local aid for education as the prior year unless a waiver is granted?

Support

Oppose

Additional Comments:

I WILL CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR ABOVE MOE LEVELS FOR WCPS FUNDING.

## Public Funding for Private Schools

### Background Points

- WCTA believes any education dollars spent outside of improving public schools makes it harder to make the progress necessary to provide a world-class education for every student.
- 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 State Standards, student retention rates, graduation rates, demographics, or discipline or suspension policies. Without these measures, it is impossible to ascertain the standards to evaluate any of the funded programs funneling public tax dollars to private schools.
- Carroll County Commissioners created a \$400,000 "Educational Opportunities Fund" to enhance and enrich the educational opportunities for home- and private-schooled students. WCTA is opposed to this type of diversion of public funding with no accountability.

4. Do you support or oppose allocating public funding to home and privately schooled students?

\_\_\_\_\_ Support

Oppose

Additional Comments:

I AM IMPLACABLY OPPOSED TO ANY PUBLIC FUNDS BEING USED FOR THIS PURPOSE. PUBLIC FUNDS MUST BE BACKED BY ACCOUNTABILITY TO ELECTED OFFICIALS AND I BELIEVE THAT TO RECEIVE PUBLIC FUNDS, PRIVATE SCHOOLS SHOULD ADHERE TO STANDARDS SET BY THE STATE OF MARYLAND AND THE WCBOE.

## Collective Bargaining

### Background Points

- WCTA supports efforts to protect and enhance the collective bargaining rights.
- Collective bargaining is the negotiation of a contract – including wages, salary scale, 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.

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

Support

Oppose

Additional Comments:

I WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT COLLECTIVE BARGAINING FOR WCPS EMPLOYEES AND WILL RESIST ANY AND ALL ATTEMPTS TO WEAKEN IT.

## Parental Involvement and Public Support

### Background Points

- It is calculated that school age children spend 70% of their waking hours (including weekends and holidays) outside of school.
- Research shows that the most consistent predictors of children's academic achievement and social adjustment are parental involvement in schools and parental expectations of the child's academic attainment and satisfaction with their child's education at school.
- Additionally, research indicates there are three major factors that influence parental involvement in schools:
  - Parents' belief that they can impact what is important, necessary on behalf of their children school;
  - The extent to which parents believe that they can have a positive influence on their children's education; and
  - Parents' perceptions that their children and school want them to be involved.

6. What would you do to increase parental involvement and public support for our public schools and educators?

COUNTY GOVERNMENT CAN DO A GREAT DEAL OF PROMOTING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA, TELEVISION, AND RADIO TO ENGAGE PARENTS AND THE COMMUNITY IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES/FUNCTIONS. PROMOTING THE MUSIC/ARTS/SPORTS PROGRAMS FOSTERS COMMUNITY AND STUDENT MORALE. I WOULD SUPPORT INITIATIVES TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN.

# Community Schools

## Background Points

- Poverty dramatically and negatively affects the wellbeing of children, particularly in the areas of physical health, mental health, safe housing, access to technology, parental support, family planning services and education, youth employment, and nutrition. Each of these factors play a large role in whether students are able to learn and do well in school—making it imperative that these opportunity gaps be closed if we want to provide equitable education in our communities. According to the data collected by MSDE, 44% of Maryland public school students were enrolled for free and reduced price meals this school year (at or below 185% of poverty).
- WCTA supports the establishment of community schools, where applicable, which are designed to close these opportunity gaps by making the school a hub for essential services that students in disadvantaged communities lack.
- Community schools generally have the following four components: (1) they serve a high concentration of students in poverty; (2) they employ a full-time coordinator to lead community school-related services; (3) they conduct a needs assessment to identify key obstacles to learning and the services needed to close the opportunity gaps; and (4) they work with community partners to bring those needed services into the school building or nearby locations to make them accessible to students and community members.
- WCTA supports equitable and adequate resources to provide every student with an opportunity to learn in a safe and non-disruptive environment. Establishing and funding community schools is a research based strategy for closing opportunity gaps and building strong communities.

7. Do you support or oppose local efforts to create and support community schools in areas of concentrated poverty?

Support

Oppose

Additional Comments:

I WOULD SUPPORT THIS INITIATIVE WITH COUNTY GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE IF AGREED TO BY THE WCBOE.

## Privatization

### Background Points

- WCTA opposes any effort to outsource or privatize education jobs that are part of a bargaining unit. We maintain that any attempt to outsource or privatize jobs of public educators violates collective bargaining agreements because such an effort is in essence terminating or firing bargaining unit positions.
- Outsourcing and privatization efforts have threatened teacher and education support professional (ESP) jobs for years. Just in the last three years, Anne Arundel County has attempted to outsource teaching services for deaf and blind students, Talbot County has discussed privatizing transportation services, and Kent County has attempted to privatize custodial services. There currently is a multi-county effort on the Eastern Shore to outsource the hiring of occupational therapists and physical therapists to work in the schools.
- When jobs are outsourced, quality control is diminished and safety is compromised. Public employees are subject to background checks that private employers often skip. After privatizing, local school boards lose control over the individuals working in schools and have little ability to provide input on job performance.
- Privateers often use an argument of cost-savings as a means of winning contracts. The amount is often misleading because they low-ball the first year operating costs. Ultimately, they reduce hours, health care coverage, or just cut jobs. All of these steps lead to increased local unemployment and less overall money in the community.

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

Support

Oppose

Additional Comments:

ESP STAFF ARE THE BACKBONE OF OUR SCHOOLS AND I WOULD OPPOSE ANY EFFORT TO PRIVATIZE ESP FUNCTIONS. THEIR HARD WORK AND DEDICATION WIELDS TO BE REWARDED WHEREVER POSSIBLE.



## Essay Questions

A. What are the top three things you would like to accomplish in the next four years if you are elected to Washington County Board of County Commissioners?

1. INCREASE RECRUITMENT & RETENTION.
2. COMPLETE OR BEGIN FULL REBUILDS OR RENOVATIONS OF SCHOOLS IN NEED OF THIS.
3. PRESS FOR INCREASED STATE / LOCAL FUNDING THROUGH MOE.

B. What is your view of the current local tax structure? What, if any, changes would you advocate?

I VIEW THE CURRENT TAX STRUCTURE AS ADEQUATE FOR FUNDING GOVERNMENT & EDUCATION.

