



AFT-MD Candidate Questionnaire for Baltimore City Races

The AFT-Maryland is a federation on local unions of the AFT within the state, including the Baltimore Teachers Union and the City Union of Baltimore—whose members work for the city—as well as state employee members of the Maryland Professional Employees Council, AFT Healthcare-Maryland, and the Maryland Classified Employee Association. Together, with the Baltimore County Federation of Public Employees, AFT-Maryland has thousands of members who are citizens of Baltimore City, as well as thousands of members who work to make Baltimore City a better place for its citizens and children.

The AFT-Maryland has prepared the following questionnaire for candidates running for office in Baltimore City as a means to familiarize the candidates with issues that our members care about most. It also allows us the chance to see where the candidates stand on these issues.

AFT-Maryland locals participate fully in the endorsement process of the Metropolitan Baltimore AFL-CIO Council; the council will announce its final endorsements sometime in February 2016. However, because we are a large contingency within the Baltimore AFL-CIO, the unions of the AFT-Maryland have a heavy influence on who Labor chooses as its candidates for endorsement.

Please take the time to complete this candidate questionnaire. It may be returned to

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Please return this completed questionnaire no later than February 5th, 2016, at 5pm. If you have any questions, please contact Todd Reynolds, AFT-Maryland Political Coordinator, at 410-764-3030.

2016 Candidate Questionnaire —BALTIMORE CITY RACES
AFT-Maryland

Candidate for ____ Mayor _____

Candidate's name__Nick Mosby_____

Address_____[REDACTED]_____

Phone_____[REDACTED]_____

Email_____[REDACTED]_____

Occupation__Baltimore City Councilman_____ Who is your employer?__City of Baltimore

May we make your answers to our questionnaire public?__yes_____

Party affiliation (circle one):

☒ Democrat Republican Independent Other (please specify)_____

Have you received an endorsement from a labor union? If so, which ones?

__Not currently_____

Have you ever held elected office? When?__Baltimore City Council 2011-Current_____

General

1. The AFT-Maryland is a federation of numerous employee unions, including Baltimore City teachers and paraprofessional and school-related personnel (BTU); Baltimore City employees (CUB); as well county and state employees; public health professionals; and higher education workers. Why should we support your campaign?

I am the only candidate in the race who has put forth a comprehensive plan to address Baltimore's most pressing issues. I have the new leadership that will deliver lasting results to Baltimore. I am also the only viable candidate in the race who has the commitment and resolve to serve the city for years to come, serving at the pleasure of the people.

Specifically, I am personally committed to a strong public education system. Accountability in providing quality educational opportunities for all youth, no matter the zip code they reside in, must be a critical focus of City Hall. Under a Nick Mosby administration, it will be. Our education system should be the launching pad for a vibrant resident base by exposing our youth to careers of the future, providing our youth with the skill set to compete in our job market, and fully equipping our youth to begin building tomorrow's solutions today.

I believe that a commitment to better schools means a commitment to delivering students high quality programming like universal pre-k and City Year, aimed at important metrics like 3rd grade literacy and chronic absenteeism. Just as importantly though, the teachers responsible for our students must have the resources they need to truly perform. That means providing support systems that range from mental health professionals to

community school coordinators who can streamline volunteers into classrooms so that teachers have an extra set of hands to maintain their learning environment. This is just the tip of the iceberg laid out by my 15 Point Plan, but it is imperative that this attention to detail be provided to our educators and students going forward.

2. Have you ever been a member of a union? If yes, please give the union name, local number, and date.

I've never been a member of a union but I strongly support the labor community and actively advocate for workers.

Worker Rights

3. Should Baltimore City librarians be granted the right to engage in collective bargaining? Should employees of the Baltimore Convention Center? If you are elected to office, will you work to expand collective bargaining rights to public employees who currently do not have that right?

Absolutely. **All** workers of Baltimore City deserve to have their voices heard. Collective bargaining gives workers a voice in their workplace. It not only helps assure fair wages and benefits but can also improve working conditions. The right to collectively bargain is essential so that working men and women have the strength to improve their living standards, provide for their families and build a strong Baltimore middle class. As the next Mayor, I will not only protect this right but work to expand rights for those who don't. I will also advocate for fair wages for the men and women of Baltimore city.

4. Many cities nationwide have passed ordinances that raise the minimum wage to \$15 per hour. Would you be in favor of Baltimore raising its minimum wage to \$15 per hour? Why or why not?

Absolutely. **All** workers of Baltimore City deserve to have their voices heard. Collective bargaining gives workers a voice in their workplace. It not only helps assure fair wages and benefits but can also improve working conditions. The right to collectively bargain is essential so that working men and women have the strength to improve their living standards, provide for their families and build a strong Baltimore middle class. As the next Mayor, I will not only protect this right but work to expand rights for those who don't. I will also advocate for fair wages for the men and women of Baltimore city.

I am also proud to have a long history of supporting working families in their pursuit of family sustaining wages and benefits. I have helped in the effort to organize janitors, and spoke out at three rallies in support of their cause. I stood by SEIU 32BJ in its efforts to organize security guards, and am 32BJ's principle supporter in the City Council. Further, I worked with UNITE Here's organization of hotel workers, which was the first successful organization of hotel employees in the City. I have also worked to codify pro-union principles into City law, having cosponsored a bill unionize BWI Airport's service workers. My administration's support of collective bargaining will be far more than lip service, and I have the track record to prove it.

5. Retirement for city workers: defined benefit versus defined contribution. The city of Baltimore has been discussing moving from a defined benefit plan to a defined contribution plan (401K) for its employees' retirement. Do you support such a plan? Why or why not?

The City must keep faith with its employees. That means preserving defined benefit plans for all current and former employees who have paid into the system. All future employees should also have defined benefit plans as an option. For new employees, the City should work hand in hand with unions to explore adding new choices like defined contribution plans. Doing so ensures City employees have access to both options, and control over which one they will enter into. It also offers the City an opportunity to lighten its financial load going forward though, whenever employees choose to utilize a defined contribution plan.

The Role of Public Education in Baltimore City

6. What do you think are some of the biggest problems facing Baltimore City public schools today? If elected, how would you help solve these problems?

We must eliminate gaps in the education system, starting with universal prekindergarten, spanning to the creation of magnet middle schools, and extending to a fully scaled Early College High School system in Baltimore. We can achieve this by:

- Developing a social impact bond for universal prekindergarten so that children are ready to learn when they enter kindergarten.
- Earmarking City-funding to identify literacy barriers and develop individual learning programs for students behind reading level at 3rd Grade, to decrease long-term literacy gaps.
- Advocating for the creation of magnet middle schools for STEM, Liberal Arts, and the Performing Arts.
- Stopping the practice of expelling preschool students, and better incorporating mental health care professionals into early childhood education in Baltimore.
- Expanding school-based health centers in high schools.

We must build a complete education system that includes tailored attention for all students, implements City Year to create community schools in all of our neighborhoods, and has new recreation centers that ensure students' well-being after they leave class. We can address these needs by:

- Establishing a labor-advisory committee that expands vocational education opportunities and ensures that the training received matches real-world work environments.
- Building new state-of-the-art recreation centers that utilize vacant spaces, which can include former schools or warehouses.
- Implementing the City Year program in Baltimore Public Schools to ensure that vulnerable students between 3rd and 9th grade have the support they need to graduate from high school.
- Improving pipelines to vocational training and higher education by investing in Early College High School so that students graduate with associate degrees.
- Expanding Youth Works to become a year-round program to incentivize school engagement and expose our youth to the jobs of tomorrow.
- Collaborating with community partners on an Early Head Start program that better serves children with disabilities.
- Ensuring that Early Childhood Education programs have a family engagement plan.

We must also increase accountability and end poor performance at North Avenue, which can only be accomplished by dedicating resources in City Hall towards making the mayor more informed on budgeting and program effectiveness. I will do this by creating a Mayor's Office of Education Reform tasked with oversight of City funding, and ensuring that the City's top priorities are being addressed by the Baltimore Public Schools and interconnected with other city agencies, such as Recreation and Parks and the Mayor's Office of Educational Development.

7. Community Schools: Beginning in August 2015, Baltimore City will have 51 of its public schools serving as a designated community school. A community school is a public school that partners with some entity (UM-Baltimore or the Baltimore YMCA, just to name a few examples) to provide either after-school academic or social services to both students and members of the community. Would you be in favor of expanding the Community School Strategy in Baltimore by working to make more Baltimore City public schools community schools? If so, why? If not, why not?

I definitely support expanding the Community School Strategy in Baltimore, and as Mayor, will work to make more Baltimore City public schools community schools. Community schools are a fantastic way to ensure that each dollar spent in a community connects to the school as the community's anchor, and that each dollar spent on schools (particularly through the 21st Century construction funds) connects back to the community. We have to see the health of one as being intimately connected to the other, and act on that vision by connecting the funding streams and the resources pools that each offers.

Beyond helping to share funding streams on mutually beneficial goals, community schools are a tremendous strategy because they help engage parents as volunteers, engage community groups in initiatives like after school programming and tutoring, and allow community school coordinators to support teachers and administrators by managing ancillary tasks that allow others to focus more exclusively on their primary goals. Each of these areas helps build an academic environment that offers the benefits more well-funded school districts are able to provide their students, and they do so by leveraging extant resources in the community.

8. **Public Charter Schools:** There are just over 40 charter schools in the state of Maryland, and the vast majority of them reside in Baltimore City. The large, out-of-state charter operators would like to weaken state law to make teachers and staff employees of the charter board, rather than employees of Baltimore City Public Schools. This would remove all protections that teachers and staff have under the collective bargaining agreement between the teachers union and the school board. This would also limit oversight of these privately run public schools by taking them out from under the purview of BCPS, as well as giving these charters a "blank check waiver" from any local school board policy. Should charter school teachers and staff be considered employees of the charter school or of the local school board? Should oversight of these schools be weakened?

Oversight of these schools should absolutely not be weakened, and teachers and staff at charter schools should absolutely remain employees of the local school board. We cannot fracture and rollback the school board's oversight of our children, as our most valuable assets, nor risk the ability of our school employees to engage in collective bargaining, which would endanger the family supporting wages that must remain the backbone of our workforce.

9. **Charter School funding.** There has been a long-running dispute between certain charter school operators and Baltimore Public Schools over appropriate funding. As a feature of being a public charter school in Baltimore, the charters are largely given cash — calculated on a per pupil basis — from the district in lieu of the services that the central administration provides neighborhood schools. Most recently, the system presented a per pupil funding formula that mandated funds intended for students living in poverty or who are English language learners actually receive those funds. Some charter operators have countered with a lawsuit, arguing that those special funds for high-poverty students or ESOL be distributed to every student equally, regardless of need. How do you think BCPS should calculate its charter school per pupil funding model?

I support continuing to factor need into the distribution of funds to charter schools, and support oversight that ensures students in need of extra funding actually receive those funds. Smart budgetary management means making investments that have the greatest impact on outcomes. When the school system invests in vulnerable populations, ESOL students and families with lower incomes as the question mentions, it has the ability to have an outsized impact on those students' ability to flourish. It is imperative that we provide every Baltimore student with the resources they need to succeed, but that means making a heavier investment in students with fewer resources in order to ensure they have the critical mass of resources that success requires.

10. **School vouchers:** should government give out vouchers (either a tax credit, or even a tax rebate) to parents who want to send their children to a private school? Please explain your answer.

I am opposed to vouchers because they divert essential resources from public schools to private and religious schools, while offering no real "choice" for the overwhelming majority of students.

11. Education funding: This past year, lawmakers in Annapolis severely cut education to Baltimore City schools. Some in Annapolis have argued that the city should be contributing more to public schools, as property values (especially in and around the Inner Harbor area) have rapidly increased. Do you agree with this assessment?

There are two truths that must be touched on here. The first is that so long as property value assessments are used to determine school funding, instead of more accurate measures of local wealth like per capita income, Baltimore will have difficulties ensuring that it receives a fair share of funding from the state relative to our City's needs. As such, I believe it is important for the state to reconsider its funding equation for local school boards.

The second truth is that Baltimore should be investing more in its schools at a local level. Many candidates talk about increasing funding for schools without saying how those funds will be used though- more money does not improve outcomes for our students if it is not paired with smart investments and attentive management. To that end, my 15 Point Plan highlights investments that I feel are especially important, such as universal pre-k, literacy programs aimed at ensuring students read at grade level by 3rd grade, and the creation and expansion of school health centers to name a few. I absolutely believe in expanded funding for our school system, and have taken the time to think through what that funding means. It is precisely this kind of thoughtful leadership that you deserve from the mayor.

12. Some current members of the Baltimore City Council have proposed a city charter amendment that would guarantee 3% of the city's budget for youth programs in the city, like recreation programs, youth mentorship, and afterschool programs. Would you be in favor of such a charter amendment? Why or why not?

I support the amendment, and have voted in its favor in my capacity as a City Councilman. Proper fiscal management means setting money aside for the City's youth as our most precious assets, but as Mayor I feel it is important that we go even further. We must be clear about how the money impacts existing funding streams and the youth-oriented programs they go to, so that we do not duplicate efforts. We also need to set clear stipulations as to how the money will be spent, in order to guarantee it is having the greatest impact possible on our youth. Finally, the management and disbursement of this annual 3% set aside must be made clear, so that we can guarantee proper oversight for it. Baltimore's youth deserve this 3% set aside for programming that helps them realize their dreams. Making sure the 3% set aside achieves that goal requires this sort of attentive management.

13. Due to the limited number of certified nurses in Baltimore City Public Schools, administrators and/or staff are forced to administer medication to students, share nurses between multiple school locations, and utilize part-time nurses. How would you help solve this issue?

Baltimore houses fantastic nursing programs at schools such as Johns Hopkins, the University of Maryland Baltimore, Notre Dame of Maryland, Coppin State, and Morgan State. We should be leveraging these relationships in cost effective forms like externships and work-studies that bring vital service delivery to our public school students while offering experience to the nursing students. Moreover, we should be training our unemployed residents for the ever-growing healthcare industry, not just as doctors and nurses but as technicians in medical technologies and as certified nursing assistants. Again, if the City invests properly in training centers for Baltimore residents, it is an opportunity to create a ready workforce who can partner with nurses from our anchor institutions to deliver healthcare to public school students. A strong mayor will actively seek out and facilitate such partnerships, and under my administration, that is exactly what I intend to do.

Of course, it is important that experienced nurses and nurse practitioners be advising all delivery of services to our students. To that end, Baltimore City Public Schools is missing an opportunity to leverage Medicaid reimbursements for eligible students as a means of subsidizing the cost of having nurses in our school system. For students whose families qualify for Medicaid, preventative and reactive treatment is covered under Medicaid regulations. This coverage extends to school nurses. If the school system streamlines the billing and reimbursement of Medicaid for services delivered to such students- and actively ensures eligible students are enrolled in Medicaid-

we can leverage a revenue stream to subsidize the cost of maintaining a team of nurses in our public schools that care for all of our students.

14. Currently, all seats on the Baltimore City School Board are appointed. Legislation is introduced almost every year to allow for at least a partially elected school board. Would you be in favor of such legislation?

Yes! Allowing the school board to be elected is more democratic and prompts citizens to take a greater interest in our schools. Elections shield schools from municipal politics and allow board members to act independently and in the best interests of the schools. An elected school board can bring all citizens closer to issues surrounding public education and critically voice our needs and concerns. Baltimore needs to breed civic engagement and support.

15. Violence in the city schools. What do you think is the best strategy to assure that our school buildings are safe and welcoming environments for children, teachers, and other education professionals in Baltimore City?

Schools need to be thought of as safe spaces for our children, BY our children. They must see our learning centers as a refuge not just during the school day, but also once it is over. Keeping schools open later in the day and allowing them to function as recreation centers in their own right is an important part of changing their role in the communities they serve and in the minds of the children who rely on them. The more students enjoy and rely upon schools as a safe haven, the more they will treat them as such, creating a beneficial cycle throughout our neighborhoods.

It is also important that we utilize professions like school police and mental healthcare workers to help cultivate an environment of acceptance and support that allows students to grow, while working through the trauma that many experience at home. The presence of school police can reinforce that no violence will be tolerated, but just as importantly, the police must be managed in such a way that their jobs focus just as much on building meaningful relationships with students so that they are seen as protectors rather than enforcers, with their zone of influence extending to focus on creating a safe environment around the school building, not just in its halls. Likewise, mental healthcare providers must be deployed not as a stigmatized resource that is only provided in instances of misbehavior, but as a more normal part of the scholastic experience that helps all students become more thoughtful, fully developed learners.

Of course, a safe school environment means safety for school employees, not just students. Sufficiently resourced schools- which come as a result of a needed increase in school funding- are an important part of the equation here. If teachers constantly feel short-handed and overwhelmed by circumstance, then they are being placed in an unhealthy and unfair space. Beyond increased funding, the community school model can be a fantastic way to build a volunteer base and partner with local organizations to help a school expand the amount of "staff" they have maintaining classroom environments and managing after school activities. An increased presence of adults working on behalf of the students means a safer, more fruitful environment that allows teachers to focus on their primary role: in-class instruction.

Vision for Baltimore City

16. The city has begun shutting the water off for accounts that are delinquent by more than \$250. It has started to turn off the water for both individual accounts and business accounts. Do you agree with this plan? Why or why not?

No, not by any means. Not only has the City been shutting off water in the homes of some of our most vulnerable residents, but it has been placing tax liens on their homes that leads to tax foreclosure sales of their homes. These foreclosure sales rob residents of their most valuable assets, and allow speculative bidders to purchase the homes, which may then remain vacant and unimproved until the buyer resells the home years later after community members' hard work ultimately improves the area's property values. We cannot allow this cycle to continue.

Many of our residents' high water bills are a result of faulty City equipment, such as broken meters or leaking pipes. The City does not investigate water bills to see why they are so high for some residents, however, and requires

residents to do so on their own even when the City may be at fault for a falsely inflated bill. A data driven government can create a formula for assessing the number of residents each home has relative to what a normal water bill range would be for that number of residents in the home. Whenever water bills exceed that normal range, the City should deploy employees to the home to see whether faulty City equipment is the cause of the high bills. Doing so not only helps what are often our most vulnerable residents instead of saddling them with unfair burdens, but it saves the City money by allowing us to deploy our resources more effectively - aiming them only at areas where there is likely a problem with the water infrastructure.

17. Privatization. Many rumors have been circulating that the city has been looking into privatizing water services. When, if ever, do you feel it is appropriate to privatize public services or to sell off or privatize city-owned resources?

It is never acceptable to privatize public services. Public employees are as efficient, if not more so, than private contract ones. When governments properly account for all of their costs, sub-contractors are often more expensive than public employees. Municipalities must frequently hire an additional layer of supervisors to make sure contractors meet legal and other requirements, leading to less efficient spend. In addition, poorly paid contract employees often collect public assistance from supplemental nutrition programs, Medicaid and other aid for the needy, whose costs should be attributed to the contract.

Contracting out public work also rolls back critical progress toward equality on the basis of gender, race and income. Public jobs have opened up opportunity to more residents than ever, especially where unions have bargained for contracts and influenced public policy. They have played an especially important role for women and African Americans, who still suffer disadvantages in the job market and are most hurt by cuts in public service pay and benefits.

It is also important to note that public services as vital to the health of our community as water should never be taken away from that community's control. Not only does public control ensure a greater degree of accountability than more opaque private management, but it also ensures elected officials are directly accountable to our residents for failures in quality or raises in price for those services. Whenever the delivery of as vital a service as water runs amok, Baltimore residents should have an immediate and direct mechanism for holding those responsible for the service accountable. That is simply not available in a privatized system.

18. There are at least two competing strategies to help the city raise funds for recreation centers: one calls on the city to sell off a number of public parking garages downtown; another calls for the Downtown Hilton to be sold. Do you prefer one plan over the other? Or a different plan to raise revenues for more rec centers? Do you think raising more funds for recreation centers should be a priority for city leaders? Why or why not?

Raising more funds for recreation centers should absolutely be a priority for City leaders - Our children need and deserve safe spaces and productive programming to be available at all times in all neighborhoods. We can invest in it up front, or we can pay even greater tolls down the road. All options are on the table for me, but I do not believe selling parking garages or the Hilton represent truly long-term solutions. Recreation centers were not shut down because we could not find enough money to simply build them. They were shut down because the City's budget was not able to continue running the centers given our prioritization of other funding areas. As such, though an influx of funds from selling off City infrastructure may help with the first step of building better recreation centers, it is an insufficient step towards maintaining those recreation centers for the foreseeable future by building their costs into our annual budget. Under my administration, we will make the tough budgeting decisions that are needed to ensure that recreation centers are not just built, but maintained, not just for a couple of years, but for decades to come.

19. The City is entertaining proposals to build a trash incinerator near Curtis Bay, located less than one mile away from Benjamin Franklin High School and Curtis Bay Elementary school. Supporters claim this incinerator will create much-needed jobs for the community. Opponents argue that incinerators pollute even more than coal-burning power plants, and should not be constructed so close to public schools. What is your position on the construction of a trash incinerator in Curtis Bay?

I support projects that bring jobs with living wages to Baltimore residents, not just after completion, but via the construction of new facilities as well. That being said, I would always prefer an investment in green alternatives and the technologies of tomorrow. It is important that we determine whether any such options exist in the case of the incinerator.

20. According to some statistics, there are approximately 16,000 vacant buildings and 14,000 vacant lots in Baltimore. Combined they total 30,000 vacant properties within the city limits, and play a large role in contributing to crime and other problems facing the city. More than 75% of all vacant property in Baltimore city is privately owned. How can we fix this problem and make sure land is being used effectively and efficiently in Baltimore?

Baltimore has a powerful receivership law that can move vacant properties away from absentee owners into the hands of new homeowners, using code violations to do so. It can also accomplish these ends for less money than purchasing the homes or boarding and painting the properties would cost the City. The difficulty is that the City does not have enough personnel to aggressively apply the law, so that vacant properties can be moved through the receivership process quickly and at a significant enough scale. My 15 Point Plan calls for the creation of a 15 person receivership task force, focused exclusively on using the receivership law as a vital tool for revitalizing our neighborhoods. It is imperative that we invest in the personnel we need to move vacant properties away from absentee owners and into the hands of responsible new homeowners. My administration will also implement a tiered tax structure that penalizes chronically vacant properties so that it becomes untenable to keep ownership of the properties without improving them.

It is imperative that we have a plan in place for making sure every dollar we spend turning around struggling neighborhoods filled with vacant properties actually leads to a robust revitalization. My 15 Point Plan lays out a comprehensive approach to targeted community development. We will create BOLD ("Building on Leveraged Development") Zones, that focus the City's efforts investments around community anchors, so that we build from our strengths and invest a critical mass of resources in those strengths. Doing so will not only make these investments a more sure bet, but in succeeding, will create more strong neighborhoods throughout our City that we can continue to build from going forward. To that end, to improve how strategically we deploy our resources, my administration will map the vacant properties throughout the City and assess their structural condition. Doing so will allow us to take a more nuanced, effective approach to combating vacancy.

We need to use strategies like demolition as a scalpel, not a chainsaw, and be intentional about how we will fill the vacant lots left after demolition occurs. Community agriculture and public parks are a fantastic way to turn these areas into productive community spaces that people will frequent and enjoy. For industrial buildings and closed school buildings that remain standing, these can and should be turned into recreation centers for our children whenever possible.