

2016 Candidate Questionnaire—BALTIMORE CITY RACES  
AFT-Maryland

Candidate for Baltimore City Mayor

Candidate's name David Warnock

Address [REDACTED]

Phone [REDACTED]

Email [REDACTED]

Occupation CEO Who is your employer? Camden Partners

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?

No, I have never received an endorsement from a labor union.

Have you ever held elected office? When? No, I've never held elected office.

## 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?

Baltimore City is at a crossroads. We need new leadership with new direction in order to turn Baltimore around. This is the most important election in a generation.

This election will be the difference between us writing the greatest turnaround story of America, or slipping backwards into permanent decline. Baltimore needs a leader with a proven record of getting things done, who can get city government working for its people again.

I've spent my career creating good jobs in Baltimore. From my small business, Camden Partners, to the Baltimore-based companies I've invested in like Paragon Biosciences or Towne Park, I've created hundreds of jobs that pay good, family-sustaining wages in Baltimore, and thousands more across the country. I know what it takes to create jobs that can support families, and anyone who's worked with me can tell you – I keep my promises.

I've also spent my career committed to education. I know that a quality education creates opportunity. I attended public schools, and I went to public universities. I came to Baltimore in 1983 with a pickup truck full of student loans and a job offer at T. Rowe Price, and it's thanks to that public education that I was able to build a business and begin giving back to Baltimore. It's why I co-founded Green Street Academy – so that students in Southwest Baltimore can have access to the resources they need to succeed. My public education gave me something that everyone in Baltimore deserves – opportunity.

My profile as a successful businessman who has been committed to bettering Baltimore is resonating with voters. Polling shows us voters are ready for a change and looking for new leadership, and a new direction. Voters want a mayor with experience creating jobs who can turn Baltimore around. You can read our latest polling memo at: <http://davidwarnockforbaltimore.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Warnock-Key-Findings-Memo-010416.pdf>.

I lead the field in fundraising and continue to run an aggressive fundraising operation. My campaign is currently running TV ads on all broadcast and more than 12 cable channels, as well as targeting voters through radio and in mailboxes. My paid communications strategy is fortified by the grassroots outreach to voters by phone and at their doors.

The endorsement and support of AFT-Maryland would add both credibility and increase our ability to gain votes through communications to your membership. I hope to receive your support.

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

No, I have never been a member of a union.

### **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?

I fundamentally believe in collective bargaining rights, for all employees. I was incredibly upset when public employees in Wisconsin, where I went to graduate school at a public university, lost those rights.

I've publicly supported the collective bargaining rights of teachers at Green Street Academy, the charter school I co-founded, by testifying in Annapolis that charter school teachers should remain employees of the school district and part of a single bargaining unit within the Baltimore Teachers Union.

As mayor, one of the most important ways I can support working families in their pursuit of family-sustaining wages is through the contracting process for large capital projects. Baltimore City spends hundreds of millions on public works projects per year; with the investment required in transportation, sewer and stormwater management, billions more will be spent over the next mayor's term. City contracts should be evaluated in a way that weighs overall benefits to our city, including worker pay, the number of Baltimore residents employed on our city's job sites, and other community benefits. I am support both community benefit agreements, and project labor agreements, to make this a reality.

We need to deploy our city's resources in a way that creates opportunity for our city's families, and that means using every tool in the city's toolbox to promote jobs and fair wages.

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?

Yes, I support a \$15 minimum wage. But we can't conflate living wage salary legislation, which I unequivocally support, with job growth. The stakes in this election couldn't be higher, and without bringing more jobs and opportunity to residents, no living wage legislation will change the lives of the least fortunate in Baltimore.

I've spent my career creating good jobs in Baltimore. From my small business, Camden Partners, to the Baltimore-based companies I've invested in like Paragon Biosciences or Towne Park, I've created hundreds of jobs that pay good, family-sustaining wages. In my capacity as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Center for Urban Families, one of Baltimore's premier workforce training nonprofits, I instituted a laser-focus on living wage jobs. I began tracking of the number of our graduates who make \$15 per hour at work – and worked with management to ensure that we were doing everything we can to help that number climb every year.

This is the most important election in a generation, and new leadership – not more of the same, typical politicians – is what we need to turn Baltimore around and create jobs with family-sustaining wages. Baltimore needs a leader with a proven record of getting things done to get this city moving in the right direction and working for its people again.

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?

I do support in moving in the direction of defined contribution, rather than defined benefit, plans for city workers, and the reason is simple: Look at what happened in Detroit.

When cities kick the can down the road on retirement and fail to fully fund pensions, a defined benefit retirement plan is in fact less secure than a 401(k). In Detroit, pensioners saw their monthly checks reduced by 6.7% as the city emerged from bankruptcy. In Baltimore, Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake's financial planners identified the same issues that led Detroit over that precipice. We have to protect retirement, not gamble with it, and with our municipal finances are in such disarray, thinking that a defined benefit plan is somehow more secure is simply delusional.

#### **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?

I know that a quality education creates opportunity. I attended public schools, and I went to a public university. I came to Baltimore in 1983 with a pickup truck full of student loans and a job offer at T. Rowe Price, and it's thanks to that public education that I was able to build a business and begin giving back to Baltimore. My education gave me something that everyone in Baltimore deserves – opportunity.

For too long, we've used our teachers as the first line of defense in a city where one third of our children are in poverty. In the first half of this school year, four students at Green Street Academy, the charter school that I co-founded, lost their fathers to gun violence. Our challenges span far beyond the classroom.

We have to strengthen public schools in every neighborhood to ensure every child has the opportunity to thrive, and that means a community school in every neighborhood. Families and children need afterschool programs, healthcare, mental health resources, adult education, workforce training and community services available right in their neighborhood. Every public school should be a community school where children and families can get more than a good education – they can get the resources they need to succeed.

And to make sure that no children fall through the cracks, every child should have an individualized plan for success created collaboratively with parents and teachers within that community school. Baltimore's public school system serves more than 80,000 children every year, and every student deserves a customized approach. Too often, our children fall through the cracks during difficult transition points, such as middle school to high school. We have to make sure that doesn't happen, and that means a renewed focus on mentorship, and partnerships with our business and faith community to support and inspire children, and help them stay on track.

A good education creates opportunity, and every child in Baltimore deserves a school where they can learn, grow and thrive.

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?

Yes. Expanding community schools would be a key part of my strategy for improving educational and family outcomes in Baltimore. Families and children need community schools, and I believe every child should have a community school in their neighborhood. So many of our children's challenges are outside the classroom. When afterschool programs, healthcare, mental health resources, adult education, workforce training and community services are all available inside the neighborhood, only then can we truly transform communities. Every public school should be a community school where children and families can get more than a good education – they can get the resources they need to succeed.

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?

Yes, charter school employees should be considered employees of the school system. No, oversight of charter schools should not be weakened. In fact, it should be strengthened.

At Green Street Academy, a charter school I co-founded in Southwest Baltimore, we work closely in partnership with our Baltimore City school board and the Baltimore City Teachers Union, to innovate on behalf of students and families. The partnership has been a benefit, not an impediment, in the important work of educating children. We know the partnership works. In fact, in 2015, when I testified in Annapolis as the new state charter school law was being considered, I spoke out in support of both keeping charter school employees as employees of the school board, and for increased transparency and oversight.

Bottom line is, when it comes to Baltimore City Public Schools, we're all in this together. We can't continue to let the rift between charter schools and traditional schools divide us. We are all part of one system. This is Smalltimore. We're close enough to talk, and we're close enough to listen, and we need to work together to make our school system work for the people of Baltimore again.

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?

We have to hold our school system accountable. Parents, community members and voters have the right to know how their tax dollars are being spent. Only when we fully understand the school system's spending, through mandatory annual audits, only then can we have an informed conversation about the funding model.

That being said, I am a passionate believer in everyone playing by the same rules. As co-founder and co-Board Chairman of Green Street Academy, I can say unequivocally that the current charter school funding model does not work because it is inherently unfair, such as by requiring charter schools to pay into the entire system's building costs – while also being required to pay the full costs of their own buildings.

I support a charter school funding model that is fair, and to be fair, it must first be transparent. By making our school spending public through annual audits, parents, community members and advocates will know where their tax dollars are going – and will be able to advocate for the priorities that matter to them.

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.

No. School vouchers have been used across the country to facilitate school choice and in Baltimore, we have great schools, with more options for parents and families than we've ever had. Vouchers would not serve the best interests of all the children of Baltimore.

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?

Baltimore City should be contributing more to public schools, but not because of increased property values or political pressure. We should do it because it's the right thing to do, and because we've been doing the bare minimum for so long.

This is a great example of why this is the most important election in a generation. The stakes couldn't be higher for our public school system, and for our children.

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 believe education gives each child something that everyone in Baltimore deserves – opportunity.

I support spending more on education, but allotting 3% for our city's youth sounds like more of the same from our political culture of low expectations. Let's not set a downward threshold on investment in our city's future.

This election will be the difference between us writing the greatest turnaround story of America, or our city slipping backwards into permanent decline.

Baltimore needs a leader with a proven record of getting things done, who can reinvest in our school system and get it working for its people again.

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?

In Baltimore, we need a learning environment where students leave school with the toolkit of skills for college or a job of their choice. We can't accomplish that if our teachers have to be nurses, social workers, or mental health counselors. This is why expanding community schools would be a key part of my strategy for improving educational and family outcomes in Baltimore.

So many of our children's challenges start outside the classroom, and in a community school, things like administering medication no longer falls on the responsibility of a teacher or administrator. When teachers can focus on teaching, and when afterschool programs, healthcare, mental health resources, adult education, workforce training and community services are all available to students and families, only then can we truly transform communities.

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, and I would go to Annapolis to fight for this. In 2015, I wrote an op-ed in the Baltimore Sun supporting a partially elected school board, despite objections from political power brokers, because we have to give parents a voice in Baltimore.

Parents and community members should have a say in what happens in their school board. Parents, not status-quo politicians, should decide our children's future.

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?

Keeping our students, teachers and administrators safe is one of the school system's most solemn responsibilities.

We have to strengthen public schools in every neighborhood to ensure every child has the opportunity to thrive, and that means a community school in every neighborhood. When we surround our students and families with the resources they need to succeed, schools become safe and welcoming – not just for children and teachers, but also for the entire community.

#### **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?

I vehemently disagree with this plan. Our city has not had sweeping audits since William Donald Schaefer was mayor. Our pensions are on their way to being broke, with millions lost thanks to unnecessary fees and bad investments, and yet we are putting homeowners at risk of losing their homes over \$250 water bills.

Fundamentally, this is about respect. We have to respect the people who invest their hard-earned tax dollars in Baltimore, and that means we have to get our money in order. Only then can we have an intelligent conversation about collections, and how they're prioritized.

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?

I don't believe it's ever appropriate to sell off city-owned resources, especially for critical city infrastructure functions like the water department.

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?

Selling off city assets sounds like more of the same ideas, from the same status-quo politicians. We have to smash the culture of low expectations, and grow our economy, so that every Baltimore resident has the opportunity to succeed. We have to grow our city, not sell our seed corn.

In my administration, you'll see two things: Renewed investment in the Department of Recreation and Parks for the first time in a generation, and a renewed commitment to community benefit agreements for new development. In my administration, developers applying for tax increment financing or payment in lieu of taxes will be required to fund recreation centers, and provide community benefits.

We need new leadership and a new direction to really turn Baltimore around. Politics as usual has been leading our city down a path to financial and spiritual bankruptcy.

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?

Bringing jobs to Baltimore will be the next mayor's biggest and most important challenge. I've spent my career creating good jobs in Baltimore, including hundreds of jobs that pay good, family-sustaining wages. But it shouldn't be done on the backs of a community that is already so hard hit by environmental health factors. We have to grow jobs and create opportunity for every Baltimorean, but not at the expense of our hardest hit communities.

No neighborhood in Baltimore should be cut off from economic stability. David believes that to turn Baltimore around, we need new leadership that puts neighborhoods first.

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?

Vacant housing hurts our neighborhoods. But without bringing good jobs to Baltimore, these abandoned properties will never be occupied by families again. To turn Baltimore around, we have to create jobs and opportunities for every Baltimore resident.

First, we have to invest in and grow our neighborhoods. Today, programs intended to rehab vacant houses are weak and ineffective. To strengthen neighborhoods, we have to provide real incentives to build affordable housing for low and middle-income families in Baltimore.

Second, we must eliminate vacant properties from our communities. Our city has thousands of vacant properties, yet we demolish fewer houses in a year than some cities do in one month. We have to finally invest in tearing down our vacant buildings, and in creating jobs and opportunity by training an army of workers from Baltimore to complete the demolition. I've supported, for example, using the demolition and deconstruction of Baltimore's abandoned vacant properties as a job creation tool.

The stakes in this election couldn't be higher. The next mayor's ability to bring good jobs to Baltimore will be the difference between us writing the greatest turnaround story of America, or slipping backwards into permanent decline. We should be using our vacant housing problem as a job creation tool.