

General Questions

1. The AFT-Maryland is a federation of numerous employee unions, including Baltimore City teachers and paraprofessional and school-related personnel (BTU); professional state workers (MPEC—Maryland Professional Employees Council), state healthcare professionals (AFT Healthcare-Maryland), state classified employees (MCEA—Maryland Classified Employees Association); as well county (BCFPPE and BCFPHN) and city (CUB) employees. **Why should we support your campaign?**

I come from a long line of teachers and preachers, which as you all know means that I come from a strong union family. It also means that my commitment to Maryland's unions is personal and absolute. My grandfather on my father's side joined the postal union after serving in the U.S. Army. My grandfather on my mom's side was the first Black minister in the history of the Dutch Reformed Church. Both of my grandmothers were teachers, my paternal grandmother was a career educator in Prince George's County. My aunts and cousins are educators and paraeducators right here in Maryland.

Unions helped to build my family and protected us when we needed it most. When my father died at a young age and left my mother a widow, it was his union that paid for his funeral, and it was her union that supported my sister when she got sick. My running mate, Aruna Miller, who served as a champion for labor during her 8 years in the legislature serving Montgomery County would be the first immigrant elected to statewide office. With a Moore-Miller administration, you will see a deep commitment to educators and labor unions. You won't have a governor who only talks about supporting unions and never acts, you will have a true partner who is committed to strengthening unions and will create economic opportunity and stability for every family in Maryland.

Growing up, I have seen firsthand that economic opportunity is readily available to some, and dangerously absent to others. I was 14 when my single mom got her first job that paid her benefits and it was watching my mom that I decided to devote my entire life to public service. So as you consider who to support in this election, consider choosing the candidate with an educator and union background, the candidate with a record of supporting unions and schools in Baltimore, and the candidate who will never walk away from negotiations.

Maryland healthcare professionals, educators, school-related personnel, children and parents are meeting great challenges, especially during this pandemic. I commend AFT Maryland affiliated unions for fighting everyday to keep their members, students and their communities safe and thriving. I promise that a Moore-Miller administration will be a strong partner to the American Federation of Teachers as we work together to lift up and protect Maryland's working families.

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

No. However, I believe that unions are the cornerstones of our democracy. All working people deserve good jobs and the power to determine their wages and working conditions. I am committed to protecting and expanding the right of workers to join

American Federation of Teachers Maryland Questionnaire

unions and bargain collectively. I come from a union family and know how good union jobs benefit everyone, and my running mate, former delegate Aruna Miller, was a member of MGCEO for more than a decade. I saw firsthand how my father's radio broadcast union stepped up to support my family after he died, and supported my sister when she got sick. My experience growing up in a union family shaped my beliefs and actions throughout my career. As CEO of one of the largest nonprofits in the United States, I fought and won unemployment insurance reforms for up to 600,000 part-time workers in New York and provided a local union emergency relief funding for child care and health workers and supported them with \$5.5 million for home health care job training and upskilling. We also invested \$11 million per year in job training and \$750,000 in adult education programs.

As governor, I will continue my strong record throughout my career as a champion for unions and collective bargaining because it is personal to me. My running mate, Aruna Miller, served in the House of Delegates for eight years and has been a champion for labor her entire career. Together, we will build a brighter future for the workers of Maryland.

Questions on Worker Rights

3. **Expanding the right to collective bargaining.** Currently, a number of state and public school employees in Maryland have collective bargaining. However, many still do not. For example, state judiciary branch workers; grad students, adjuncts, and full-time faculty in the University of Maryland System; faculty at our state's community colleges; coordinators in community schools; and many county and city librarians; do not have the right to bargain collectively. If elected, will you sponsor and/or support legislation to grant these public employees the right to engage in collective bargaining with their employer?

Collective bargaining is one of the most powerful and effective tools to improve working and living conditions. The ability of workers to organize and speak with a collective voice is fundamental and universally recognized as a right. As governor, I will support legislation that would not only expand, but also protect the right to collectively bargain for all Maryland public sector workers.

My commitment to our unions and collective bargaining is personal and absolute. I saw the difference that a good union job made in my own family. During my tenure as the CEO of one of the nation's largest anti-poverty nonprofits, we allocated substantial resources towards supporting low-income workers and worker's rights. Our policy work centered around advocating for paid leave expansion, increased wages for front-line workers in the care sector, reforming the unemployment insurance systems, and ending wage theft and forced arbitration clauses for workers.

4. **Raising the minimum wage.** Our members see every day the harmful impact of a minimum wage that does not keep up with rising costs of living throughout the region. While Maryland will raise its minimum wage to \$15 per hour in 2025, it still will not be indexed to inflation, and Marylanders working at this compensation level will continue to

American Federation of Teachers Maryland Questionnaire

fall behind. If elected to office, will you author and/or support legislation to tie the minimum wage to the rate of inflation?

We cannot expect to attract the talent we need to create a thriving economy without investing in our workforce and that's exactly what I'm going to do as governor. Investing in our workforce and improving the benefits Marylanders have access to will better support workers and allow businesses to recruit and retain high-quality workers and improve their production and bottom lines. That means raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2023 and indexing it to the cost of living to ensure that worker wages don't degrade over time. Doing so will put more money in the pockets of working families who most desperately need it. It will incentivize Maryland's economy and will help combat poverty and inequality in Maryland.

5. **Binding arbitration in contract negotiations:**

Maryland recognizes the importance of collective bargaining as a way to assure employees at the state, municipal, and school district level have a fair and democratic voice in the conditions that govern their employment. For many of those employees and their unions, when disagreements arise during negotiations, there is no mechanism by which those disputes can be resolved. In most cases when the parties reach an impasse, management can implement their proposals without the consent of the employees. Because of this, management often realizes there is no need to bargain in good faith. To fix this flaw, many states and local governments have implemented binding arbitration. When an impasse arises at the bargaining table, management and the union agree to take their case to an objective, third party arbitrator. The arbitrator hears the case, and issues a ruling that both management and the employees must agree to. There is some form of binding arbitration for state employees in Connecticut, Delaware, and Maine, and Baltimore County offers binding arbitration for its municipal employees, for example.

Do you support objective, binding arbitration for contract negotiations for school district, city, county, and state employees? As an elected official, would you support strengthening those rights for the public employees that fall under your jurisdiction?

Yes. I believe that the workforce shortages we are seeing across Maryland are an indication that our workers are not receiving the wages and benefits they deserve and strong collective bargaining will be an important part of the process for increasing them.

Negotiations are necessary to find areas to improve and areas to compromise. However, the current state collective bargaining law for government employees does not provide a level playing field for workers. With no true avenue to resolve third party disputes, unions are severely hindered in their efforts to secure fair wages and working conditions. As a result, the state workforce's wages and benefits lag behind local jurisdictions and budgets are balanced by exploiting vacancies, increasing the workloads on workers. The right of workers to organize and speak with a collective voice is fundamental. As governor, I would support legislation that would expand the right to collectively bargain to all Maryland public sector workers. I come from a union family and know how good union jobs benefit everyone. I would also encourage our

American Federation of Teachers Maryland Questionnaire

federal delegation to pass H.R. 842 – The PRO Act, which has already passed the House of Representatives and will empower employees and organizations to control more of their workplace wants and needs.

Throughout my career as the CEO of one of the largest anti-poverty nonprofits in the country, I always stood firmly as a voice for workers and allocated substantial resources toward supporting worker's rights. Our policy work centered around advocating for paid leave expansion, increased wages for front-line workers in the care sector, reforming the unemployment insurance systems, and ending wage theft and forced arbitration clauses for workers.

6. **Public employee compensation:**

Under the current governor's administration, it is rare for state workers to get the compensation they deserve, even though the state has often had a budget surplus. As a result, too many public agencies have staffing problems, as many employees leave for better compensation in the private sector. What is your plan to assure state, county, and municipal employees (including workers employed at BCCC, the Maryland School for the Deaf, and all public, state-supported higher education institutions throughout the state) that their compensation levels will be financially competitive with the private sector?

Maryland currently has 325 thousand unfilled jobs across the state and both the public and private sector are experiencing the strain from these workforce shortages. Reports of workforce shortages come as no surprise given the immense strain of the COVID-19 pandemic and the lack of fair compensation for their important work. We know that workforce shortages are particularly concentrated in sectors where employees are being exposed to COVID-19 the most and where employees are earning low wages. This is especially true for our public sector including our schools, hospitals, government agencies and more.

We also know that we are losing qualified state employees to local governments and the private sector because we are failing to offer competitive wages. I recognize the people closest to the challenges are also closest to the solutions and as governor, I will work in true partnership with our public sector workers to ensure we are offering them the competitive wages and benefits needed to address staffing shortages in addition to partnering with public health professionals to ensure they are not working in fear of the virus.

I also believe that we need to increase professional development opportunities, prioritize improved working conditions, wraparound supports, additional investments in employee mentoring, and explore other actions to reduce burdens such as reduced workloads and in the case of our overburdened educators, requiring designated times for them to plan their courses.

This is key for our schools in particular, where even before the pandemic, Maryland struggled to recruit and retain high quality educators and school support staff. In fact,

American Federation of Teachers Maryland Questionnaire

47% of second year teachers in Maryland do not return for a third year of classroom teaching, but these issues also affect all school staff. Compensation is one of our strongest tools to retain high quality school employees.

The Blueprint calls for an initial 10% salary increase to begin closing the gap with educators and education support professionals (ESPs) salaries with peers. However, we know that many ESPs have low wage jobs and are not guaranteed salary increases from the Blueprint. Professions ranging from school psychologists to bus drivers, administrative staff, teachers aids, and cafeteria workers are all vital to creating a world-class education for every Marylander.

Ultimately—while the Blueprint was a good start—we must ensure that all school employees receive compensation that is competitive and benefits that actually support them. Maryland deserves a governor that will ensure we have the supply of world-class workers we need by prioritizing employee pay and incentives—especially those serving high-need districts. As governor, this will be one of my top priorities and I will ensure that everyone is at the table to get this done as quickly as possible.

7. **Health insurance transparency.** Audits and budget analysis show some government healthcare surplus funds are being diverted for use in unrelated areas. In effect, employees are therefore paying much higher than their negotiated healthcare splits for employer self-insured healthcare coverage. What should a public body (the state, the municipality, or the local school system) do with money refunded to employees' health insurance programs? As an elected official, will you sponsor legislation that would force government employers with self-funded insurance programs to be more transparent with actual claim cost, rebates and other refund programs?

I wholeheartedly support greater transparency in government processes, including for government employers with self-funded insurance programs. There are new federal rules and laws that take effect as early as this year that will require insurers and group health plans to provide cost estimates and payment amounts, and some required reporting as well. The Department of Budget and Management already submits quarterly reports to the General Assembly on general health care spending trends, but these reports can and should be improved to provide greater transparency.

As governor, I would support legislation to increase transparency for government employers with self-funded insurance programs that ensure information is presented in a meaningful, complete, and actionable way. I believe that every Marylander should have access to affordable, quality health care and as governor, I will work with stakeholders and the legislature to ensure that any surplus stays within the program and be used to bring premiums down for future years to help ensure that government employees are receiving their negotiated health care split.

8. **Retirement for public employees:** defined benefit versus defined contribution. Most Maryland public employees have defined benefit retirement plans like a pension. This

American Federation of Teachers Maryland Questionnaire

allows employees to plan for their retirement because they know exactly how much income they will be receiving. With defined contribution retirement plans like a 401(k), employees contemplating retirement are never quite sure when the right time is to retire because of changes in their plan's investments. Do you support keeping public employee retirement plans as defined benefit/pension plans?

Every Marylander deserves to age comfortably and retire with dignity. I will work to ensure that every Marylander has the ability to save for retirement. Working people's retirement income should not be at risk. Pensions are proven to bring financial security to retirees and their families. As governor, I will support current defined benefit and pension plans for public employees.

9. **Prescription drugs for retired state employees.** The State of Maryland is currently being sued by a group of retired state employees over the loss of their prescription drug coverage. Their position is the state has backed out of the promised retiree prescription drug benefit. Do you support full health benefits for retirees including prescription drug benefits? Under what circumstances, if any, would you agree to a reduction in benefits for retirees?

I wholeheartedly support efforts to ensure that every Marylander has access to the affordable prescription drugs they need. Nobody should be forced to choose between their health and other necessities. A Moore-Miller administration will work with the legislature to increase coverage for affordable prescription drugs for all public sector employees.

As governor, I will also work to increase prescription drug affordability for every Marylander and our public sector employees that have dedicated their careers to serving the state deserve to have their prescriptions covered into retirement.

10. **Appropriate staffing levels.** This past fall, numerous news reports confirmed what many state employees have already known: that staffing in a number of state agencies have fallen to levels that the safety of workers and the ability to carry out their duties has been compromised. For example, the Maryland Department of Health has not been able to admit court-ordered patients to state mental health facilities in accordance with the law due to the lack of staff. Likewise, the State Investment Park Commission found that park ranger staffing levels are too low to meet the demand of Maryland Residents wanting to visit our state's parks. The most recent state analysis shows nearly every state agency has at least a 10% vacancy rate, with some of the larger agencies having a vacancy rate over 15%! Would you support efforts to increase recruitment and retention of qualified state, county and city employees? Would you make funding of additional staff a priority?

Workforce shortages are impacting every area of our society, including our government agencies. We also know that we are losing qualified state employees to local governments and the private sector because we are failing to offer competitive wages.

When our agencies have open positions, it means we are leaving opportunities on the table and failing to appropriately serve our constituents. Just look at what is going on in

American Federation of Teachers Maryland Questionnaire

the environmental space. Because we have a shortage of inspectors, we're not holding industries accountable to address major spills or other issues. That must end. In a Moore-Miller administration, filling vacant positions will be a top priority. We will also address the underlying factors preventing us from attracting and retaining the best talent to fill these jobs.

We must focus on things like raising wages, improving access to essential benefits like paid sick, family and medical leave, and making health care more affordable. That is also why I am such a strong supporter of unions and strengthening collective bargaining. Unions play a key role in achieving that exact goal. As CEO of one of the nation's largest nonprofits fighting poverty, we worked closely with local unions to provide training that enabled workers to access better wages, and we fought our hearts out to address wage theft and secure paid leave. I know that working together with AFT we can address the workforce shortages at the state level with a similar approach.

But we're also facing a skills gap that is hindering workforce development. Right now in Maryland, our unemployment rate is 5.4%, meaning that we have 168,000 people out of work. Simultaneously, we have 325,000 unfilled jobs, a clear indication that we are not preparing people with the skills they need to fill those jobs. In fact, while most jobs require some level of training after high school, less than 40% actually require a four-year degree, and 47% of jobs could be filled with the right job training.

I promise you that the Moore-Miller administration will take immediate action to address the workforce shortage and skills gap by helping Marylanders to enter and stay in the workforce. My administration will partner with our community college system and invest in new, targeted short-term credentialing programs, additional apprenticeship programs, and we will explore innovative ways to provide financial support or stipends to students enrolled in these programs.

I will also work to expand the tuition-free Community College Promise Program and implement a Service Year Option that allows students to get compensatory tuition at a Maryland college or university in exchange for serving a year in a public service role.

Public Education in Baltimore City

11. **General** [for candidates running for Governor, Comptroller, or for office in Baltimore City legislative districts only]: What do you think are the three biggest problems facing Baltimore City public schools? If elected, how will you solve these problems?

Throughout my career, I have focused on breaking down barriers to education for low income and first generation students and helping students to get the skills they need to secure great paying jobs in the workforce. I believe that from cradle to career, education is one of the key pillars for Marylanders to access jobs, higher wages, and the opportunity to build wealth that can be passed on to their children. It's these issues that are the north star guiding my campaign and my administration when I'm governor.

My number one priority will be fully funding and implementing the Blueprint for

American Federation of Teachers Maryland Questionnaire

Maryland's Future, which will greatly enhance our ability to serve our students and provide a world-class education. The Blueprint will allow us to expand pre-k to children in need, which will better prepare our students to enter kindergarten and improve lifelong outcomes.

I am also going to focus on keeping kids safely in the classroom and addressing the monumental impact of COVID has had on teachers, students, and their families. We will focus on the mental health of both our students and educators, and supporting community schools and invest in school construction dollars.

But we also need to address the challenges our schools have faced long before the pandemic. We have to get our students back on track with intensive tutoring and wraparound services, and we have to work with public health experts to keep them safely in schools. And we need to address the workforce shortages in schools and recruit diverse educators that are reflective of the student population.

12. **Education funding.** The state has enacted the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, an ambitious plan developed by bipartisan education experts and stakeholders. The Blueprint will provide a world-class education our students need. Despite hand-wringing from the current governor, the state has the funding to pay for the Blueprint through Fiscal Year 2026. Beginning in FY 2027, the state will have to make decisions regarding revenues to continue to provide every student in the state the education they need. If elected, how would you propose the state fund the Blueprint? How will you advocate for these necessary revenues?

As governor, my number one priority will be fully funding and implementing the Blueprint. This is not only a historic investment in our children, but also our future. I am proud to have personally testified in support of the Blueprint which will be a catalyst for generational change in Maryland.

Both Aruna and I look forward to working collaboratively with stakeholders (educators, paraeducators and families) to operationalize and implement the Blueprint that Kirwan laid out for Maryland. As an administration, we will have the same level of diligence and discipline with engaging educators when it comes to its implementation.

The legislature has already directed enough funds to cover the costs to implement the Blueprint through at least 2026 and the anticipated revenues from marijuana legalization and online gaming will allow us to cover costs in 2027 and beyond.

13. **Living Wage for Paraprofessionals.** One element that was unfortunately unresolved by the Kirwan Commission recommendations was the pay for Paraprofessionals and School Related Personnel (PSRPs). For too many PSRPs throughout the state, their compensation levels are not enough to be considered a living wage. Will PSRP compensation be a high priority for you if you are elected to office? How can the state better show its appreciation to PSRPs working in our state's public schools?

American Federation of Teachers Maryland Questionnaire

Paraprofessionals and School Related Personnel (PSRPs) are critical to providing a world-class education to every Maryland student. Unfortunately, these essential workers are not receiving the wages and other benefits that they deserve. We cannot expect to be able to recruit or retain high-quality workers without prioritizing competitive wages that attracts new talent and encourages our existing employees to stay in the classroom.

Reports of workforce shortages in these professions come as no surprise given the immense strain of the COVID-19 pandemic and the lack of fair compensation for their important work. We know that many of these workers have low wage jobs and are not guaranteed salary increases from the Blueprint. I recognize that the people closest to the challenges are also closest to the solutions, and as governor, I will work to address these shortages by making sure we are engaging school staff to ensure their needs are being addressed. I fully support the ability for our workers to collectively bargain which will be an important part of getting workers the wages and benefits they deserve.

14. **Public School Construction and Renovation** [for candidates running for Governor, Comptroller, or for office in Baltimore City legislative districts only]. In 2013, the state passed the 21st Century Schools Program, which allowed the Baltimore Public School System and the Maryland Stadium Authority to leverage bonds to renovate roughly 25 public school buildings. While a good start, Baltimore city still has the largest portfolio of aging and obsolete school buildings in the state; therefore, the program needs to be expanded. If elected, what will your administration do to assure more aging school buildings in Baltimore city will be eligible for renovations?

In a recent study of Baltimore City schools, only 17% of schools were found to be in good or better condition. It is impossible to expect our students to succeed in the classroom if those classrooms are closed because of crumbling infrastructure. There is also absolutely no reason that some students should lack air conditioning while students in other parts of the state are able to attend comfortably every day based solely on where they live.

It is essential that we come together and find a way to ensure that our students are learning in 21st Century Schools. My administration will work closely with the Stadium Authority on how to best finance construction as well as options to increase the state's contribution to school infrastructure. The Moore-Miller administration will also explore federal funding opportunities and we will not leave a single dollar on the table.

15. **Public charter schools and local oversight.** There are over 50 public charter schools in the state of Maryland, and the vast majority of them reside in Baltimore city. Private, out-of-state charter school operators have previously wished to weaken the state law overseeing charter schools to make teachers and staff employees of the charter board rather than employees of the local school district. This would remove all protections that teachers and staff have under their collective bargaining agreements. It would limit oversight of these privately run public charter schools by taking them out from under the

American Federation of Teachers Maryland Questionnaire

purview of the local school boards. It would also give the private operators 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?

We believe that charter schools have the power to innovate, allowing the educational system to try exciting new interventions and best practices for all. At the same time, charter schools must be held accountable to the same standards and be required to serve all students with the same level of care as the public school system. I believe that local boards should have oversight of charter schools, that charter school enrollment should be open to all students and families, and that we should seek to staff all of our schools with high quality educators.

We will ensure charter schools have the freedom to enhance Maryland’s educational system while requiring them to live up to the same standards as Maryland’s public schools, providing equal access for all, and preparing our young people for post secondary and career success. As governor, I will ensure that any educator whose position is paid for using public funding is included in collective bargaining agreements.

16. **School vouchers and the BOOST program.** Maryland is a state that diverts public funding to send students to private schools - the BOOST school voucher program. While the program is not codified in law, the governor’s budget every year has re-directed millions of dollars of public funds to these private schools, many of which discriminate against students and families who don’t adhere to that school’s beliefs such as gay marriage. If elected to office, what will be your plan regarding Maryland’s BOOST school voucher program? Should the state ever give public dollars to students to attend a private school? Would you support tax breaks to corporations that fund student scholarships for private k-12 schools?

My commitment is for every Maryland student to have access to a world-class public education that families believe in and that meets the diverse needs of our students. While BOOST might create opportunities for some students, it will never be able to do so at scale and is just a band-aid on the overarching problem. Many of these children are not enrolling in these private schools as a result of the program, but rather, simply taking advantage of the program’s offering.

We must address the systemic challenges that schools face in order to provide a great education for all students. As governor, my administration will phase out the BOOST program. However, I am very sensitive to the students that are already participating in the program and it’s important that we don’t disrupt their educational progress, but we would not grow the BOOST program like what has happened under the current administration. My priority is to ensure every child has access to a quality public education, which is why I am so committed to the full implementation of the Blueprint.

17. **School Staffing.** In too many of our public schools, administrators are not following the law and are hiring people who are employees of non-profit organizations, some of whom

American Federation of Teachers Maryland Questionnaire

are uncredentialed and untrained. Because they are not direct hires of the school district, they are not covered by the collective bargaining contract, nor are they held to the same accountability standards as certificated employees. If elected, will you work to ensure that school districts follow the law to prevent public schools from hiring employees from nonprofit organizations, circumventing the collective bargaining agreement? Under any circumstances is it acceptable to you for a school to hire an uncredentialed and non-unionized employee to be involved in the education of Maryland students?

Outsourcing to meet public education needs is not ideal, but sometimes is necessary. This is something that my administration will look into in order to figure out a better system to ensure that staffing needs and certified employees who fill those needs can be hired and folded into the structure to protect those employees and the integrity of the education being provided.

My administration will work with organizations including AFT Maryland to implement a system that includes the auditing of outsourced contracts to discover where there is waste going into the outsourcing of jobs and where redundancies can be corrected to ensure all parties are satisfied with the product in the classroom and the relational use of public funds.

18. **Teacher recruitment and retention.** The global pandemic has exacerbated the increasingly challenging problem of teacher retention and recruitment. Far too often, experienced, successful educators are made to leave our school systems. Newly hired teachers in some alternative teacher education programs stay in the classroom for an average of 3 years. How can the state enact legislation to support the retention of the highest quality educators, and recruit more to their ranks?

The importance of a diverse educator workforce cannot be overstated. Our students deserve to learn from educators who look like them and are as diverse as the student body they are teaching. My plan commits to investing in educators of color with wraparound supports, including mentoring, job training, and development; and track educators' career progress with comprehensive demographic data to improve our understanding of readiness, retention, and progression.

My administration will support Grow Your Own (GYO) educator development programs to create a more diverse teacher pipeline throughout the state. There can be a pipeline in which students of color can be funneled quickly into teaching jobs for elementary schools, and begin serving the communities they grew up in. We would also look to foster partnerships between HBCU educator programs and high minority school districts. Finally, we will leverage the good work and best practices already being done in this area by learning from organizations like the Center for Black Educator Development, which focuses on the recruitment and retention of Black educators across the country.

We also know that one of the barriers to entering the educator profession is student loan debt. This is why I will provide supports to Marylanders whose credit and economic prospects are disproportionately affected by student loan debt by expanding Maryland's

American Federation of Teachers Maryland Questionnaire

Student Loan Debt Relief Tax Credit Program, exploring the creation of a State Student Loan Refinancing Authority to allow the state to issue loans and refinance high-interest private debt, and providing access to free, professional student loan debt counseling.

Recruiting, retaining, and supporting excellent educators are of utmost importance as we work towards our goal of providing all students with a world class education. Study after study shows us that the quality of the classroom teacher is the best predictor of student achievement, and my budget priorities will reflect an investment in recruiting and supporting educators throughout Maryland.

My budget will invest in the recruitment and retention of educators in the following ways:

- Expand pathways to enter the profession by investing in Grow Your Own (GYO) educator development programs that expose students to the teaching profession and inspire them to go into the classroom.
- Raise educator salaries throughout the state, making teaching a more financially appealing career choice.
- Partner with Maryland HBCUs and other colleges and universities to identify more diverse educator candidates.

19. **Elected versus an appointed school board** [for candidates running for Governor, Comptroller, or for office in Baltimore City legislative districts only]. In 2022, the citizens of Baltimore city will finally be allowed to elect two additional members to the school board. Baltimore city is currently the only jurisdiction in the state whose entire School Board of Commissioners is appointed. In 2022 the board will expand from 10 to 12 seats, with the two additional seats being elected rather than appointed. Of the 23 other Maryland county school boards, 19 are fully elected, and four are an appointed/elected hybrid, with only Wicomico County having more appointed than elected positions. If elected, would you support legislation transitioning Baltimore city to a fully elected or hybrid board with the majority of seats being elected? What is the optimal structure for Baltimore City's School Board and why?

In 2016, the General Assembly enacted HB558 creating two elected members of the Baltimore City School Commissioners for 2022. Mayor Scott supports BTU's position that the school board should adopt a hybrid model with a supermajority being elected. I believe leaders at the state level should support him.

As governor, I will support the Mayor, BTU, and the legislature in their efforts to get this done. I also believe that students should have a voice in the decisions impacting their education and I support student members of the board having the ability to vote.

20. **Standardized testing in the schools.** In our state's public school system, instruction time in our classrooms is often pushed aside so that students may prepare for and take a plethora of standardized tests. What is your view on standardized testing in our state's public schools? If elected, what policy positions would you take regarding the number of standardized tests required of our students?

American Federation of Teachers Maryland Questionnaire

Schools are learning communities, and cookie-cutter rating systems and standardized tests don't provide a full picture of the amazing things that happen in our schools every single day.

I don't believe in teaching to the test. Maryland should seek alternatives to standardized testing and explore the use of performance-based assessments like portfolios, demonstrations, or some sort of multiple-measure assessment that takes a holistic approach to having students demonstrate what they've learned. We want to prepare high school graduates who are ready to go off into the career or college of their choice, and who have the ability to critically analyze and apply what is learned, which is required of good performance-based assessments and help us to meet this goal.

After decades of standardized testing, this change won't be easy and will require support for teachers and administrators as they design and provide feedback on performance-based assessments.

Vision for Maryland

21. **Transportation.** When Governor Hogan canceled the Red Line rail project, he replaced it with a revision of the MTA regional bus lines and renamed the system the Baltimore Link. How effective do you believe this new bus plan has been? How can the state improve the transportation needs of its residents?

As a result of the billions of federal dollars coming to Maryland as a result of the infrastructure plan, we have an unprecedented opportunity to make the structural improvements needed to bring generational change to Maryland, but we must ensure that the economic opportunities that come with this investment are available to everyone. It's important to recognize the value of transportation, not only as a means of mobility, but as an economic engine and as a vehicle for helping lift people out of poverty. Low-income communities and communities of color are less likely to own vehicles and are more likely to rely on biking or public transit.

It is clear that the governor's plan to replace the Red Line rail project with revisions to the MTA regional bus lines is far from sufficiently meeting our communities' needs and particularly the ones that rely on public transit the most. In fact, a bus trip from Woodlawn High School to Hopkins Bayview would take an hour and 20 minutes and have 57 stops. This makes it nearly impossible for someone without a car to find and keep a good job and it hinders the ability of our business to find employees. We need to do a better job of connecting people to opportunity and a Moore-Miller administration will dedicate the resources needed to ensure that our public transportation system is reliable and gets people to work and school on time.

This includes building the Red Line and making other improvements to the state's mass transit system, like approving commuter rail stations in West Baltimore, Bayview, and other historically neglected communities to provide people with access to employment.

American Federation of Teachers Maryland Questionnaire

The North Star of the Moore-Miller administration will be expanding work, wages, and wealth for every family in Maryland, with a commitment to equity. Access to quality, reliable transportation is key to connecting Marylanders to opportunities and it will be one of my top priorities as Maryland's next governor.

22. **Revenues and closing unfair tax loopholes.** In order for the state, county, city, and local school system to continue to provide the services to Maryland residents that they deserve, do you believe the state must work to close loopholes in our tax structure? From things like instituting combined reporting (where out-of-state corporations no longer avoid paying taxes on the revenues they generate in Maryland) or a carried interest tax (where wealthy hedge fund managers pay the same income rate that the rest of Maryland residents pay), would you introduce and/or support legislation that would make our state tax code more fair?

Maryland's current combined state and local maximum tax rate of 6%, which puts us in the bottom 15 of all states in terms of overall income tax liability. The legislature has been considering reforms to Maryland's tax code to increase the tax rate for higher income levels which needs to be seriously considered. I support reforming Maryland's tax system to implement a more progressive tax policy that ensures that everyone pays their fair share.

When it comes to the corporate tax loopholes, advances in technology and increased access to markets are rapidly changing how and where corporations are taxed. I support, and will continue to support, the state's efforts to modernize its tax code to drive competitiveness like the 2018 legislation establishing Single Sales Factor apportionment for all businesses. But with that, there is a need to ensure these changes don't also create corporate loopholes.

Implementing Combined Reporting will help prevent large corporations from gaming the system to avoid paying taxes. This is an issue of tax equity and just one step I will take to modernize the tax code. New businesses and industries, particularly Big Tech, operate under tax rules that were not designed with their business models in mind, resulting in unfair tax advantages. As governor, I will work to ensure that every company that benefits from our markets pays its fair share.

When it comes to the issue of special interest tax breaks, I will ensure that our state is vigilant in monitoring our current tax breaks and using data to determine if the benefits to the state that they were originally created for are working; if not, we will adjust them so that the state is not giving away tax revenue to big businesses that show no evidence of contributing to our economic growth.

23. **Privatization, General.** As public employees, each of our members works for an entity that is directly accountable to the residents we serve. Far too often, when jurisdictions and school districts choose to contract out or privatize those services, the level of accountability changes with those services. A private company or nonprofit is accountable to its board of directors or shareholders, and not necessarily to the residents

American Federation of Teachers Maryland Questionnaire

that rely on its services. In addition, their employees are seldom unionized. If elected, would you support any plans to privatize and/or farm out work to a private company or nonprofit in our state and local governments or local school systems? If so, why?

I believe that a strong public sector is crucial to an effective government and our public agencies and systems should be able to stand on their own. Additional public-private partnerships have the potential to better serve the people of Maryland, but they should not come at the expense of public sector jobs. My plan is to strengthen our state agencies by addressing the staffing shortages that are driving outsourcing - meaning higher wages and better conditions.

As governor, I will bring all public sector workers and stakeholders like AFT Maryland to the table to ensure we are offering the competitive wages and benefits needed to close workforce shortages and strengthen public-private partnerships in a way that does not devalue the work of our state professionals, and the training and experience they bring. Our number one priority as a state, whether in education, health care, transportation or other areas, must be to provide the highest level of service to the people we serve. If there are occasions when the government cannot fill a particular function and the need to contract out with other experts arises, we will absolutely ensure that they are held to the same high standard.

24. **Privatization, specific.** On September 2, 2021, the Maryland Department of Health announced the Facilities Master Plan, which includes plans to close Western Maryland Hospital Center in Hagerstown and Deer's Head Hospital in Salisbury within the next 5 years by transferring patients to private facilities. In many cases, these facilities offer the only long-term care options for Maryland residents on dialysis or who are dealing with chronic respiratory problems. If elected, would you support the plan to close these state facilities? Would you support outsourcing state, county or city operations?

As governor, I will work with all stakeholders involved to ensure that we are making appropriate and informed decisions about facilities that balance the state's responsibility to provide services to our communities, community access to care, the quality of services and jobs that would be at stake. When I was just three years old, I watched my father die in front of me from a virus that was completely treatable if he had just received the basic care that he deserved. That experience shaped my life and, specifically, my view that affordable, quality health care is a basic right every Marylander deserves, period. Our state is home to some of the very best hospitals, medical research institutions and health care facilities in the entire world – and that's something we should all be proud of. But at the same time, so many Marylanders can't access those institutions or even afford very basic care – which shouldn't be the case. The ability to access health care should not be determined by your zip-code, and nobody should have to drive hours to get basic or emergency-level care. When we close down facilities or outsource critical services, it can create additional barriers to care and prevent people from accessing their support systems. It also eliminates good state jobs.

American Federation of Teachers Maryland Questionnaire

Additionally, I believe that affordable, quality health care is a basic right every Marylander deserves, period. Our state is home to some of the very best hospitals, medical research institutions and health care facilities in the entire world – and that’s something we should all be proud of. But at the same time, so many Marylanders can’t access those institutions or even afford very basic care – which shouldn’t be the case. The ability to access health care should not be determined by your zip-code. We are defaulting on a basic principle I have leaned on since my time as a Captain in the U.S. Army – leave no one behind. My administration will ensure every Marylander from every corner of the state is able to access the high quality health care they need.

25. **State’s mental health and addiction crisis.** The need for mental health and addiction services has increased during the pandemic. Mental health beds in the state hospital system are filled with court ordered patients. If elected, would you support increasing private and public resources for treatment to be sure all Maryland residents have access to the care they need?

It is great to see that mental health is receiving more attention in our American society. The work of reducing stigma is beginning to create a palpable sense of acceptance. We must never rest in the push to make mental health awareness, and mental health treatment as accessible as care and coverage for physical ailments of patients.

It’s critical that we increase access to mental health professionals. The field has gained enough momentum that there are legitimate solutions for those struggling, and Maryland is uniquely positioned with some of the best health care on earth that people should not have to make a decision between their emotional well-being and their basic necessities. The information gathered during the COVID-19 pandemic can help inform us about what some approaches might be, such as increased telehealth visits. The state budget for funding research and support should be increased at this point where we have finally accepted that any person could, at any time, just need some help to make it through. We need to add some support to the saying “It’s okay to not be okay,” by the addendum of “...and here are the places that can help.”

Treatment for mental and emotional health should not just be thought of for adults. If Maryland really wants to make an impact, the treatment has to be made available for children and adolescents as well. There are many reasons that someone may benefit from mental health professional care; including biology, chemistry, stress, anxiety, trauma, etc. This list does not just affect adults, but children as well. In many cases, symptoms start for some of us in childhood, and go untreated into adulthood. It is crucial that our kids are cared for more than just physically. This will lead to future generations with greater awareness and empathy, that is already seeming to permeate through society by deliberate and exhaustive advocacy of those with the platform to shine a light on this previously downplayed lifesaving aspect of the healthcare industry.

26. **Vaccines and working with unions to return to work.** The COVID-19 pandemic has of course been a challenge for the safety of Maryland residents and our members who have been returning to work. While we hope that the worst of the pandemic is behind us, we

American Federation of Teachers Maryland Questionnaire

know from past experiences with mutations of this novel virus, recovery and a return to normalcy may not be linear. Vaccines must be a part of a comprehensive strategy to get past the pandemic, as well as an important tool for fighting public health threats in the future. What role do you believe unions and management have in constructing a plan to vaccinate their workforce? What in your mind is the way unions and management can work together to make sure represented employees are offered a COVID-19 vaccine?

Vaccines are our pathway out of the pandemic and I will always follow the science and advice of experts. I strongly urge everyone who is eligible to get vaccinated and to get the booster. This should not be a political or partisan issue - vaccines are safe and we know that COVID-19 vaccines are incredibly effective at preventing severe illness and death.

We have already seen vaccine requirements for health care workers and other essential workers, and many businesses are implementing vaccine mandates because we know they are effective in reducing transmission and preventing severe illness and death. And while there are some medical and religious reasons why people can't be vaccinated, the vast majority of people are eligible and should be vaccinated. For those who can not be vaccinated, a more robust testing protocol should be implemented to slow the spread of the disease.

I strongly believe we can increase vaccination rates by partnering with trusted leaders in communities, including unions such as AFT Maryland, on vaccine hesitancy and encouraging these local leaders to host vaccine clinics and encourage people to get vaccinated.

I will also work with organizations like AFT Maryland as we consider adding the COVID-19 vaccine to school vaccine schedules once it receives full approval for all school aged children. As governor, I will always take a data backed approach to keep our schools open and safe and follow the advice of experts to get it done.