



Education Advocate

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Check Out Candidate Positions on Education Issues - AND VOTE!

Public funding for private schools

[Click here to check out the ACLU of Maryland's Candidate Survey](#) providing information on candidates' views on a wide variety of civil rights issues, including the education-related question, "Do you oppose public funding (such as tax credits for scholarship donations or vouchers) for students attending K-12 private or religious schools?" The ACLU of Maryland surveyed candidates for Governor, Attorney General, and the Maryland Senate and House. [Click on the link](#) to select which races you want to review in either a summary form with yes/no responses or the long form with individual answers to questions if the candidates provided additional information.

Baltimore City School construction, Adequate state funding for education, and Pre-K expansion

The Baltimore Education Coalition hosted a [non-partisan gubernatorial forum](#) this past March to discuss educational issues of particular importance to the children of Baltimore. Candidates answered three questions about: the upcoming reevaluation of the state education funding formula, the importance of full-day Pre-K, and Phase II of the Baltimore City school construction program. [Click here to watch a 13 minute video of candidates answering these questions.](#)

City School Construction and Jobs

The Democratic gubernatorial candidates all commented on Baltimore's 21st Century school building program and jobs in the debate on the Larry Young show. [Click here to listen to the Gubernatorial debate.](#) Skip to part 3 in order to hear the segment on school construction and jobs.

Baltimore City Schools to Serve More 4-Year-Olds in Pre-K

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Pre-K is a fundamental building block of success for children, especially at-risk children. Baltimore City Public Schools currently provides full-day Pre-K programs for at-risk students in the city to help children be ready to learn upon entering Kindergarten. Next year, city schools will be serving an estimated 400-500 additional 4-year-olds in their programs that would have originally been accommodated by Head Start Programs across the city. This shifting of children to the school system will allow Head Start to serve more 3-year-olds. Further changes to the Head Start programming will include expanding all of its offerings to full-day programs. These changes will benefit city children who will receive an additional year of instruction and additional instructional hours improving Kindergarten readiness and providing stable child care for their working families.

In order to provide seats for the children moving to the City Schools' program, the system will be relocating underutilized Pre-K classes to areas of anticipated high need. This, coupled with changing an enrollment practice that saved seats in every class for specific types of high-needs students that often went unused, the district anticipates being able to provide seats to all of the children who would have previously been served by Head Start programs.

Baltimore City Schools recognized the enormous need and value in providing full-day Pre-K to city students and in 2009 made it a priority to provide full-day programming for at-risk 4-year-olds in the city despite not receiving funding from the City or the State for anything above the standard half-day model. As the state reexamines how it funds public education, it is imperative that Pre-K funding be included in the updated formula on a per-pupil basis and at a full-day level if districts provide full-day programs.

Are You a Passionate Advocate for Baltimore City School Children?

Are you looking for a way to help Baltimore City Schools continue to improve for all the city's children? Willing to spend a few evenings a month with people working to do the same thing? Then consider joining the Parent and Community Advisory Board for Baltimore City Schools. The ACLU of Maryland is looking to appoint a Baltimore City resident, preferably a parent of a City Schools' student, to serve a two year term on the Board. [Click here for more information about this volunteer opportunity and information on how to apply!](#)

American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland Education Reform Project

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