



CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

CITY COUNCIL 1st DISTRICT CANDIDATE:

SCOTT GOLDMAN, DEMOCRAT

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1. Please articulate your overall vision for how young people will be supported from cradle to career in Baltimore City? What will be the priority strategies within your first four years in implementing this vision?

My vision is a city where students have access to the resources they need to be successful in their academic careers and where they can be prepared for rewarding and successful careers after graduating. I have met with principals and teachers from across the First District, and what I hear over and over again is that it's not necessarily a money problem that is holding our school system back but a culture problem with Central City Schools at "North Avenue." Though the school system is undoubtedly underfunded, what I have come to believe is that North Avenue is either micromanaging schools when it shouldn't or not supporting them when it should. As a member of the City Council, I will ensure that the Council is a place of accountability over the school system so that effective principals and teachers who show initiative are rewarded. Additionally, we need to stop blaming hard-working educators for our societal challenges. Teachers are many things, but they cannot substitute for doctors, counselors, and supportive families. For our children to succeed, we need to make schools the social hub of our communities by expanding the community schools program. We have just over 50 community schools; finding and funding the next 50 is my top education priority on the Council. It should be the standard for each school to have a liaison who can connect students and parents with the vital services they may need. We must bring in mental health experts, doctors, and dentists to our schools to ensure all children and their families receive the medical services they need so educators can focus on teaching and students on learning. Finally, we need to build a culture that embodies the definition of community, where all Baltimoreans are proud to send their children to public schools because they provide the best and most well rounded educations.

2. The Mayor and City Council do not currently have oversight authority over Baltimore City Public Schools. Would you advocate changing the current city/state partnership? What changes would you recommend to the overall administration/approach of public education in Baltimore City?

I think that the current relationship between Baltimore City and the State should be revisited. However, regardless of where the control is, the fact remains that Baltimore City Public schools are underfunded and more money is needed from the state and federal levels. In a state where we pride ourselves on having one of the best education systems in the country, the quality of Baltimore's physical school buildings and the inadequate resources provided to teachers and kids is an embarrassment. Maryland must take ownership of the fact that children from Baltimore City, who come from families that are generally poorer than the state's medium income, require many more resources to educate. Accordingly, I would support the current efforts before the State Legislature to build a hybrid school governance structure with at least some elected members to the School Board.



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3. Eighty percent of a young person's life is spent outside of school, yet just 15% of Baltimore's school aged young people have access to afterschool programs. City leaders from around the country have begun to identify the importance of afterschool and summer programs as a critical support and have invested in citywide systems. Participation in out-of-school time opportunities boosts academics, attendances, school promotion and completion and it helps connects young people to caring adults. If elected, what would your approach be to addressing opportunities for youth beyond the school day and school year?

Afterschool and summer programs are absolutely critical in ensuring low-income students are able to stay competitive with their peers and expanding funding is a priority of mine. My approach is to ensure the afterschool and summer programs in place – after school recreation centers and programming and summer jobs programs, such as Youthworks – continue and expand through public-private partnerships. When our businesses and non-profits are invested in students, we'll be able to reach more students and offer a variety of opportunities for children to continue to grow and develop.

4. In the 70's and 80's Baltimore operated around 130 recreation centers. That decreased by nearly half by the early 90's. Currently, Recreation & Parks operates just 40 recreation centers. There are ongoing questions about the available resources of the Department based on the lack of audits. Some of the recreation centers require major upgrades in both physical plant and programming. While a few new, modern recreation centers and being built, it is clear that many neighborhoods lack quality recreational opportunities. How would you change the trajectory of Recreation and Parks? How will you address the challenges of programming and physical plants?

Recreation and Parks, like many city agencies, can be reinvigorated and placed on a stronger trajectory through common sense reforms, which is the focus of my campaign. A city employee (who I will leave anonymous) told me that seven different agencies are responsible for mowing lawns in Baltimore, including Recreation and Parks. Seven. Streamlining contracting and bureaucracy can produce savings we should reinvest in recreation opportunities for our children. By taking a close eye to how Recreation and Parks functions, we can reduce waste and use that money to ensure better programming is offered, expand community centers, and better maintain the existing facilities and parks we have. Finally, the Mayor's budget continues the trend of closing recreation centers, which I believe is a short-sighted approach that requires more community input to correct.

5. Young people want jobs and they are natural entrepreneurs. Unfortunately, youth unemployment is at an all time high and young people are denied the experiences and skills they need to be prepared to enter the workforce. If elected, what will be your approach to youth employment and entrepreneurship? How will you partner with Higher Education and Industry?

Youth employment is critical to the success of our city. If high school students had more opportunities to work, they'll be able to earn money, learn job and social skills that will improve their chances at full-time employment, and become more competitive for college and post-high school employment. As the First District Councilman, I will work with the city government, higher education institutions, and the burgeoning service sector right here in our district to ensure that young people have access to good, high paying jobs that can set them up for future success.



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6. The resilient young people of Baltimore City experience trauma every day. They are both witness to and victims of violence. They have very real reasons to feel stressed and afraid. A growing body of research recognizes the importance of understanding and implementing trauma informed care within schools, community services, social services, and law enforcement. What approaches will you take, if elected, to implement trauma-informed-care and/or restorative practices in the public sectors?

Trauma informed care is a critical piece of ensuring that our young people are able to learn effectively in school and can help them deal with the horrific violence they often witness at such a young age. If elected, I will continue to expand the community schools program and use the oversight role of the Council to ensure trauma informed care becomes an integral part of the services that community schools offer.

7. In 2014, Mayor Stephanie Rawlings Blake, with the support of City Council, established one of the strictest youth curfew laws in the nation and advocated for year round curfew centers. Proponents of the curfew centers thought they were a good strategy to keep kids safe and to connect young people and their families to services. Opponents feared the curfew enforcement would further strain police community relations and disproportionately target young people of color. Questions remain about the actual utilization of the curfew centers and whether or not the “Youth Connection Centers” serve their intended purpose. If you are elected, what would your position on Curfew and Curfew Centers be? How would you build more positive interactions between youth and law enforcement?

I support the curfew and think that the curfew centers are crucial to the implementation of the curfew being successful. But the effectiveness of the centers and the relationships between communities and police all depend on the success of the larger transition the BPD is undergoing to the new community policing model. As the crime prevention officer of the Fells Prospect Community Association, I organize the citizens on patrol walks in my neighborhood and have been a long-time advocate of community policing strategies. To make this work, the Council must oversee this transition successfully.

8. The parents and families of young people are often left out of the equation when we are seeking solutions. Family and community engagement requires long term, sustained efforts to build trust and offer authentic opportunities for families to have a voice and feel supported. The Community School strategy has been shown to increase family and community engagement and improve school climate and culture. The city funded community school strategy is currently operating in 50 schools out of 180. Do you think every school should be a community school? How would you expand the strategy?

I think expanding the Community Schools program is the most important thing the City Council can do to improve education in Baltimore City. It should be the standard for any school that wants to be a community school to be able to become one. Community schools are repeatedly highlighted as model education systems, which not only improve academic performance but also address the health and social needs in a community. I will not forget a story that a First District principal told me: He said that a student stopped doing his homework, and no one could figure out why. The (bi-lingual) community schools liaison was able to talk with the student's parents (who primarily spoke Spanish) and found out that their landlord had taken all the light fixtures in the apartment where the family lived. So when it got



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dark, the student could not read or write. The community schools liaison was then able to organize other families in the school to donate lamps to the family as well as connect the parents with legal services to challenge the landlord's illegal conduct. Many schools now play this central a role in our communities; we should recognize this and base more services at our schools. This is something we can accomplish, and the costs to the City per year, per school to hire a liaison (supplemented by organizations like the Family League of Baltimore), pay for themselves in the benefits they bring to the community.

9. The Baltimore City Health Department provides chilling statistics in its 2014 Health Disparities Report. Factors of race, gender, economics, and zip code can all be determining factors for a short and painful life, and the trajectories begin even before birth. Given what we know now about what works, how will you approach making sure every child has the opportunity to grow up to become a healthy adult?

The statistics in the report are beyond troubling and show just how much work we need to do to ensure our young people have opportunities to succeed. Making sure that every child has the opportunity to grow up to become a healthy adult means making sure students have an education they can be proud of and that will serve them as they move toward adulthood. We need to, as noted above, make community schools the standard, keep the Twenty-First Century Schools construction plan on track, reward innovation at the school level, and work with our state partners in Annapolis to restore the funding cuts from Governor Hogan. Unless we make longterm investments in education – for all out students across all of Baltimore – it will be impossible to improve the devastating outcomes too many students face.

10. The bright green footprints painted on Baltimore City sidewalks are supposed to denote safe walking passageways for children to get to school. However well intentioned, the reality is that in many neighborhoods there are no safe passageways, and green footprints cut through active drug and gang territory. With schools of choice, some older students are traveling more than 2 hours both morning and evening on unreliable and sometime unsafe public transportation. What will you do when elected to make sure young people can make it to school everyday safely?

I look forward to walking my son to our neighborhood school when he is older (he is only ten months old, now!). We are fortunate to live in a safe neighborhood where I can do that, and where he can walk on his own one day. But that is a luxury many do not have. Indeed, a volunteer on my campaign attends the only high school in the First District, Patterson High, and she tells me it takes her one hour to get from her home to high school, taking multiple busses. The two issues in the question are (1) safety and (2) transportation. To make our City safer requires the longterm work of addressing poverty; unemployment; racial division; other systemic issues; and the work of transitioning successfully to a community policing model, as noted above. The unreliability of public transportation is another issue and many students face the same unreliability of the MTA system I saw everyday while riding the bus to the MARC station to go to Washington, DC, when I commuted there during my first year living in Baltimore. When students are late to school or arrive after a lengthy and tiring journey, they are not in a position to succeed. We need to improve our transportation system, and as Councilman, I will work with our State leadership to improve the MTA – this means maintenance, realtime bus tracking, expanded use of the Charm Card, and streamlined routes – so that everyone can get to school



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safely and reliably.