



CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT CANDIDATE: KIM TRUEHART, 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?

1. I have/will continue to advocate for the creation of a Comprehensive Strategic Plan for Youth and as City Council President I will lead an initiative to complete a plan. This initiative will bring youth, advocates, stakeholders and philanthropists from the profit, nonprofit and government sectors together to produce the plan as well as identify the priority strategies, implementation timelines and funding sources to ensure successful implementation.
2. Strategies which are priorities will include: expanding vocational training and education opportunities; expanding the community school strategy; expanding early learning opportunities and Judy Centers; expanding after school and out of school time opportunities; reducing testing; reducing the disproportionate amount of contact young people have with police; expanding job readiness and job opportunities.

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?

1. No.
2. The terms of the current city/state partnership are silent on many aspects, specifically on the matter of oversight, however, the 2012 Office of Legislative Audit's review of BCPSS clearly expects the City Council to take a firm hand in scrutinizing the district's budget when it comes before the council annually for approval. This extract from the Oversight section of the OLA's most recent audit is germane "Baltimore City government exercises authority over the System primarily through the review and approval of BCPSS's annual operating and capital budgets." As council president, I will intensely review the district's budget, particularly the budget line for internal audits and the fact that over 100 internal financial and performance audits have been completed by the district's own audit team since 2013, however, none of the audit reports have been disclosed to the public. Additionally, I will push to remove the school board's presence/dominance at school board public meetings which inhibits the public's ability to directly interact and engage with school system officials and administrators. Lastly, I have been a vocal advocate for the past 3 years for changing the composition of the school board and changing the way board membership is determined. I strongly endorse HB0558 "Partially Elected School Board" which is pending in the Maryland General Assembly and if voted favorably it will increase the number of members and make 2 seats elected positions.

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



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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?

1. The community schools model is a successful approach for expanding options available to students beyond the normal school day and I will continue to advocate for increasing the number of community schools operating in the district. Additionally, the current school year as mandated by the state board of education requires a minimum of 180 days each school year. As a proponent of the concept of year-round learning, I would advocate that the state establish new standards, not based on our out-dated agrarian calendar, but on 21st century teaching and learning protocols which will facilitate schools becoming year-round learning hubs within our neighborhoods for children, families and the surrounding community.
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?*
 1. As Council President I will push for splitting the Bureau of Recreation into an independent city agency that focuses on operating all of the city's recreational assets and leaves Baltimore's world class parks system as a separate entity as well. Additionally, I will push for establishing new public/private partnerships for operating the city's recreational assets which will include infusions of private funding/strategies to help sustain these operations.
 2. Lastly, as Council President, I will initiate a review of the protocols used in the ongoing sales of city-owned housing assets to developers that provide tax incentives to developers who in-turn reinvest those tax benefits into renovation and repairs of the housing assets with the city retaining a small percentage of ownership along with profit sharing of future gains by the developer. These protocols may be a viable option that facilitates proactively overcoming the challenges of programming and physical plants that leave our recreational facilities out-dated.
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?*
 1. Baltimore City has a large non-profit sector many of which are institutions of Higher Education and health care organizations and many are also key employers of the local



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workforce. The current administration in 2011 negotiated an agreement with several major non-profit institutions which established a Payment In-Lieu of Taxes (Pilot) fee schedule. The current agreement expires in June 2016 and in its first year provided more than \$6M in payments to Baltimore's general fund.

2. As Council President I will work with the administration to pursue an alternative that instead of fees being paid by these institutions, the city negotiates both fees along with the delivery of services that assist our youth with employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.
3. Lastly, I will work to identify sufficient funding to provide a summer employment opportunity to every eligible Baltimore City youth who applies to the YouthWorks program.

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?*

1. I currently serve as a faculty member of the Krieger Foundation's Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC) titled "Baltimore: A Trauma-Informed Resilient City for Children and Families." This position has and will continue to afford me the opportunity to spread awareness of world class, data driven approaches to help Baltimore heal from the every day trauma we all experience. As Council President I will work to include city agencies in this Collaborative's work and will sponsor legislation, if needed, to advance the implementation of the best practices, awareness and services into government operations.
2. Additionally, as president I will explore establishing a new council committee titled "Human Services". This committee will be responsible for providing oversight of agencies/departments who deliver services to city residents. Oversight will include public hearings, briefings and reports about the outcomes and future initiatives that focus on removing barriers that lead to improving the quality of life for all residents.

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?*

1. During council hearings on the youth curfew law I expressed my strong opposition and when it became evident that the legislation would pass, I submitted three amendments that were



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incorporated into the final legislation which ultimately made the law's impact less onerous on children and their families.

2. As an active citizen of Baltimore I drafted a course curriculum for the police academy that was adopted for one class in 2015 and received approval from the current police commissioner for adoption again this year. The four-hour block of instruction brings police academy members into our community at a local public school to directly engage with students, parents, faculty and community leaders. I will continue to work with the Department to engage with the community in meaningful ways, specifically by establishing a police /community task force to focus on collaboratively developing strategies that prevent violence in neighborhoods.
 3. In 2015, I drafted legislation which was introduced to the Maryland General Assembly and signed by the governor which requires an annual report on Baltimore City Police Department's Community Policing Outcomes. One of the 13 items required in this annual report is the number of recruiting events the Department sponsored or participated in in Baltimore City. The initial report is available on the Police Department's website for public review which reports that the Department engaged in 17 such events from November 2014 to November 2015 which included events to recruit Baltimore City youth onto the police force.
 4. As council president I will push for greater transparency regarding the implementation, execution and outcomes produced as a result of the Curfew Law and will hold public hearings for the public to provide input into establishing a path forward.
- 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?***
1. Yes.
 2. State legislators have begun to embrace the community school strategy and have proposed limited seed-funding to expand the number of schools. While municipal funds are currently being invested to operate 50 city schools, this strategy must be fully adopted by the city school board and policy must be developed which integrates the strategy into the base-line school system teaching and learning delivery framework.
 3. If state legislation is approved by the governor, it may be necessary for the Baltimore City Council to pass local legislation to implement the new state policy directing the Family League, the Baltimore City Public School System and other city agencies, as may be necessary, to comply which I will definitely support.
 4. As council president I will vigorously work to ensure school policy and city agency policies are adjusted to fully embrace the community school strategy and as evidenced by my volunteer support of Liberty Elementary School, a thriving community school, I will actively engage in furthering the expansion into every city school.



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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?*

1. Expanding the community school strategy to every school in Baltimore City will help facilitate affording every student the opportunity to grow up to become a healthy adult. When successfully implemented, community schools can bring health care practitioners into school facilities to serve the physical, mental and social development needs of the entire school population.
2. As council president I will work to establish partnerships with local medical institutions to deliver these services to all 85,000 students enrolled in the city school system with the goal to eliminate the disparity that proves a child's zip code determines their quality of life and ultimately their life expectancy in Baltimore City.

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?*

1. As an active citizen I served on a working group led by the Maryland Highway Safety Office titled "Baltimore Metropolitan Regional Traffic Safety Program". In 2014, I invited representatives from the state Highway Safety Office and the Baltimore City Transportation Department to take a walking tour of the roads, sidewalks and pedestrian corridors leading to the two elementary schools in my neighborhood. The tour led to the identification of several challenges that hindered the safe passage of students attending both schools. As a result, both the state and city representatives initiated several traffic safety improvements and offered to bring their educational programming into each school to help improve student awareness and safety.
2. In 2014, the mayoral administration proposed a reduction in funding for the school crossing guard program in their preliminary FY 2014 budget. I opposed the reduction and initiated a request for a council hearing on the proposed reduction which would have reduced the number of crossing guards significantly from the 300 employed at the time. The hearing was successful at stopping the reduction and maintaining the number of employed crossing guards.
3. As council president, I will continue to advocate for the creation and maintenance of safe passages to school for all of Baltimore's students and will work to ensure funding for school crossing guards remains in future city budgets, especially in the absence of a functional city-operated red light camera system.



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4. Lastly, as a daily and dissatisfied user of our public transportation system, I will work to establish a meaningful, ongoing relationship with the state's MTA to ensure the needs of city residents are considered in the day-to-day and long term planning by the agency.