



## CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

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### MAYORAL CANDIDATE: CINDY WALSH, DEMOCRAT

- 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?***

Expanded and Improved Medicare for All will use Baltimore City as a platform towards a public health system option to augment what is one of the most private and profit-driven health systems in the nation. This means we will build out our Baltimore Public Health agency into each community having a public health/mental health clinic with a health agency branch tasked with collecting data, providing oversight and accountability, centralize all outsourcing of public health issues. This will provide easy access to citizens in a community to prevention, treatment, transparency, and voice in public policy regarding health issues. This public health structure will also create public hospital access with partnerships with non-profit hospitals. Building strong public schools well-funded and resourced means each school will have a nurse, social worker, special needs and at-risk staff right in the school available to students at all times. Keep in mind, if you are building a public agency in each community that will collect data---tracking citizens over the long-term across agencies would be part of what most citizens say is totally lacking in Baltimore.

Commitment to rebuilding all communities comes with it construction and fresh food economies hiring from the communities and making small business growth the focus. Doing this creates a platform for home-ownership as houses are rehabbed for the most housing instable. Downsizing a community gives great opportunity to grow public green space and a grand public green space with public greenhouse/barn for animal husbandry/trees and orchard trees especially create opportunity for healthy food, for student involvement in what will become a fresh food economy in each community. From growing food, creating food products, distribution of food, to having fresh food markets around the community---this will have children involved early in good food habits.

Rebuilding each community and its economy entails as well cultural arts small business venues, small media and recreational small business venues and in each case children will partner as curious, as volunteers, as school vocational extensions, and hopefully will be the next small business owner in their own communities with each venue. This builds diversity in career paths, expression of voice, builds connectivity between a diversity of citizens, and gives children a reason to come back to their communities after higher-education. Having a stable, health community allows for long-term connections to family and friends. Recreation for families is a major concern and our liberal arts and humanities folks need more venues for expression.

Keeping our liberal arts and humanities colleges open and well-funded can be done with city and Federal revenue even if the state pulls back on funding. Seeing Federal funding is attached to meaningful higher-education and less to this for-profit education that often proves poor quality---keeping our degree programs strong and accessible to all qualified students will assure we have a stepping stone to the middle-class for all citizens in Baltimore. Nothing brings more revenue to our city coffers than



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people able to fuel our local economies with consumption, home-ownership, and small business-ownership.

- 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?***

The State of Maryland was handed control a few decades ago because of failure of Baltimore City Schools to meet Federal Equal Protection for underserved and special needs students. Flash forward to today and our special needs and underserved students are in far worse shape due to very bad education policy these several years. The original problems for our Baltimore City Schools was a failure of our schools to receive Federal and state funding designated according to law. A lawsuit on behalf of Baltimore City Schools a little over a decade ago targeted over a billion dollars in funding over a few decades lost to Baltimore and that does not include our Federal funding. Building oversight and accountability in all Baltimore agencies will include our public schools making sure these funds get to Baltimore and then seeing that each school and classroom receives the equal protection equity in funding. A Mayor of Baltimore can send a legal team to the State of Maryland demanding control of public schools be returned to Baltimore due to the extreme failure towards improvement over these few decades. If Maryland refuses we go to Federal court. I feel sure Baltimore will get control of our Baltimore School Board with these actions.

The next issue is the hybrid school board. The current policy for hybrid school board makes appointed members have the majority. I would push for voted members having the majority because that is the only way citizens will have power to affect education policy. I would appoint educators, parents, small business owner, special needs, and at-risk specialists to our Baltimore City School Board.

These several years has seen the most corporatization of our K-12 in the nation. The drive is towards a goal of vocational K-12 with schools part of corporate campuses heavy with early apprenticeships and testing tied to tracking children into vocational pathways. NO ONE WANTS THAT. I should say I have not heard anyone supporting this other than those tied to corporations and politicians working for them. I will remove all those corporate structures. I am not against community charters but we must first build a strong public school structure according to equal protection and then weave in community charters as parents want them in their communities. I do not support testing and evaluation of teachers and students as was installed with Race to the Top. I do not support Common Core. We know how to build rigor in our classrooms and teachers know how to evaluate. We need to get politicians and statistics out of education so students aren't afraid of a grade and teachers and administrators are not pushed to give easy A and B. This weakens rigor and grades are simply a tool of assessment and everyone has strengths and weaknesses meaning grades do not define individuals.

I said earlier I would be building the public structure in each school---people hired from a community when possible with art and music teachers rotating between schools.



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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?*

I described earlier how building business venues into community economies creates after-school programs right in the structure of the economy itself. I do not want vocational exposure until 9<sup>th</sup> grade as I support the well-funded and resourced approach of high schools having a strong vocational and technology lab on site. So, in the course of a daily broad curricula students will be in and out of differing kinds of learning environments. I do not like so much online lesson exposure as is being built now. As an academic I believe students have a learning curve of about 5 hours of productive learning and I know recreation is vital to break that window of daily learning. After-school programs would be sports, STEM activities, school clubs, theater et al and I feel strongly that all of the above needs a base inside our public schools. Right now all funding from pre-K to after-school is heading for private businesses and non-profits and I will look to send that funding to the school itself for their own programs. This gives students, teachers, and parents say as to what after-school looks like. Of course we want as well to augment after-school with local non-profits wanting to partner. To be a public school there can be no private or corporate donation of money or resources of too much consequence that does not go to all other schools so charters wanting to operate under different guidelines would be considered private charters. Meeting those guidelines to me means a real public charter would be funded as all other schools.

Most parents are seeing how corporate non-profits are surrounding their community schools. 'Wrap-around-services' that are only meant to remove the public staff inside these schools and these non-profits will be defunded soon enough. Global education non-profits are coming with a set education venue for each subject and we do not want our schools having only those choices. These non—profits have something to offer and parents and teachers will know which ones will augment existing programs the best. I will make sure our public K-12 is well-funded and resourced, that every community has a public school, our high schools have strong vocational shops and technology labs, and there are lots of business connections for students ready for part-time jobs and internships. I am a strong supporter of arts and humanities and will make sure funding is there and equity in funding and resources for all Baltimore City public schools.

My description of recreational venues and grand public green spaces connects well with after-school sports and recreation programs. I am a strong public transportation candidate who wants things like bike lending 'libraries' in our public schools and community centers and that can extend to lending sports equipment for underserved communities. Being able to play sports outside of school builds skill, competitiveness, sportsmanship, and connections between citizens.



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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 are 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?*

When your platform is building every Baltimore City agency into each community that will include Parks and Recreation. The failure to fund our public services comes with decades of what most citizens understand to be too much control by power corporate institutions that directed much of our city resources to growing power and expansion of a few corporate interests. This filled our government system with fraud, corruption, and misappropriation of city revenue and a platform of REAL oversight and accountability will find \$1-2 billion each year to add to our annual budget and that represents what our communities used to get back in the 70s and 80s. Revenue simply needs to be protected and sent to communities. Rebuilding Parks and Recreation in each community started with my vision of a grand public green space, it extends to a public school in each community with a playground and athletic court, and as this question asks---yes, it includes a public community center. The current push is to replace what was once public centers with more corporate non-profits but I do not support this because the 'public' status is what makes it open to all, free to all public discussion, and allows citizens to define what that center will look like.

When I talk of a recreational small business economy I see each community with a unique recreational venue that will attract citizens from one community to another and act in inter-connectivity of communities with competitions and special events. One community has a skate-board park, another a MOTO-X park, a skating rink, a rock-climbing park, an aquatic center, an equine park. All of this does not have to be public as a city subsidy for a small business can come with equal access and guidelines towards safety and affordability.

As a public transportation advocate I see bike/skate/pedestrian pathways towards downtown in through communities that allow free movement through what we hope are greenscapes and that will be under the venue of a Parks and Recreation in combination with Baltimore Department of Transportation. One last policy I would like to see are several public athletic fields with a mission of hosting local K-12 sporting events on a citywide scale so parents, students, and teachers can highlight their teams more frequently. I love and support our professional teams-----we need more venues for our K-12 and public university competitions.

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?*

First, I do not see global corporations and campuses as beneficial to anyone and especially not our students. I will fight control of our local economy by global corporations. We cannot build a small business economy in our neighborhoods with powerful corporate entities controlling all revenue, job creation, and hiring policies. I stated earlier the need to have students feel they can attach to



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community small business venues with the goal of opening a small business of their own. I want youth to have real paid employment and will move away from the current push towards volunteerism, internships, and VISTA positions that pay little to nothing for some years and leave no job placement assured. Part time jobs have always been easily found in our Baltimore Public agencies especially in the summer months and give as much exposure to job skills as any global corporation can. Baltimore has consolidated too much of their higher education and I will encourage our education 'anchors' to be the liberal arts, music, and humanities schools they have been in the past removing corporate connections to the degree we have now. A Peabody and MICA under strong Johns Hopkins funding makes for less autonomy and I would as Mayor of Baltimore offer the opportunity of city revenue and Federal funding to allow for autonomy if wanted. Our universities as anchors have these several years seen their mission as being the driver of community development both economically and culturally under this consolidation. Arts and humanities public universities usually have a different mission---that of facilitation to what a community of citizens already know and need. They have the ideas and university anchors simply help them with what they need to attain that goal. This is the partnership I see with our universities.

The policies coming from Congress these several years scaled back higher-education access for our middle/working class and poor and created 'tiered' levels of tracking into vocational 'degrees' rather than into our 4 year university degree programs leading to strong wages and careers. I will open degree programs for all and seek to augment Federal higher education funding to these 2-4 year degree programs. Vocational certifications and apprenticeships in continuing education has always been around and will be as well in higher education tracks after high school but so too they offered an academic track with preparation for any 4 year university. The move towards more and more online higher-education is not where I see our public universities and I do not like too much online lesson formats in our K-12. We can see the State of Maryland pulling away from funding our public universities and I feel strongly Baltimore revenue with Federal revenue will keep our public humanities universities and private liberal arts colleges strong and independent.

Regional businesses and national corporations have always had their structures for internships and on-the-job training and they will continue to offer such for students wanting to take that pathway.

***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?***

My entire platform is based on doing just this. Let me talk of mental health and drug treatment in a city with every Baltimore City agency build out to each community. Baltimore has these few decades turned to heavy use of PHARMA in treating everything from mental illness problems to at-risk behaviors in students and citizens in communities. They had to use heavy PHARMA because they dismantled all public agencies that used to give support. I do not support using PHARMA unless it is necessary so a holistic approach of prevention, treatment, and follow-up will be attainable with the build out of the public structures in our K-12 and community health/mental health clinics and agency presence to assure data collection, tracking across agencies, and transparency for citizens and their families. Of course I am



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simply rebuilding what communities always had until these last few decades of 'small government'. The closing of public schools have left parents and children in fear of not getting into a school, having to attend schools well out of their neighborhoods, and the tiered funding of underserved and special needs students have a decline in resources to the very students needing those funds and resources the most. I am an Equal Protection candidate that will see these funds are distributed to each school so every community will be able to address the needs of mixed-income families all having special needs, underserved, and advanced placement children.

Long-term unemployment, deepening poverty, loss of basic public services and resources has tremendously increased the pressures already felt by underserved communities. Now we are having pressures on food security to add. With an influx of immigrant populations---which is good---comes as well organized crime and this is what we see in the spike in drug, prostitution, and gun black market activities increasing an already too high crime and violence in our communities. Baltimore made little attempt at making sure communities had housing, employment opportunities, had venues of cross-cultural connectivity allowing for acclimation of our new citizens to communities already under stress. My platform reverses all of this and moves away from communities being made corporate campuses to one built for the citizens here today including our immigrant families.

Recreational and cultural venues are an outlet for youth both emotionally and physically. My vision makes this central to community development. I feel we have placed too much emphasis on finding mentors outside communities and have not given attention to plenty of good citizens right in communities. True, we need professional mentors for exposure to future employment but we must allow citizens to see the value of culture right in their own neighborhoods and this is why having citizens from communities in our K-12 as staff, as volunteers, and coaches is critical to community health and stability.

***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?***

Democrats do not violate civil rights and liberties and this was such a violation. The idea that we have to keep children inside to protect them shouts a failed governance by Baltimore City Hall and its development policies. The problems in our neighborhoods comes from a deliberate strategy of keeping our local community economies from growing while sending all funds to build global corporate campuses and my platform reverses this.

Baltimore City Hall has a long history of failing to do two vital things with police policy. First, it installs police policy written by a NYC Mayor Bloomberg and Johns Hopkins both of which tend to ignore civil rights and liberties. This is from where policies like zero tolerance, curfew, and militarized policing



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originates. As a Mayor who will disconnect City Hall from Hopkins and Baltimore Development Corporation they will not write my administration's police policy or say who the next police commissioner will be. Second Baltimore City Hall does not fund the administrative side of police department and this is the side that collects data and provides the transparency citizens want with our policing. If you are going to hold officers accountable you must have the data and know it is correct. That said, our police officers have been placed under grave conditions when the policies of zero tolerance and militarized policing places them in danger of angry retaliation. It is a lose-lose policy strategy that must go. Baltimore has one of the highest police budgets because of a constant flow of 100,000 citizens through an arrest, court, jail process having almost nothing to do with lowering crime. This is what creates distrust and alienation of our police from communities. When you eliminate all of this lots of revenue can be transferred to real community policing. This is when police are hired from communities and there are many different categories of community policing and not simply street crime with stat quotas. This means police officers with no other mission than to be part of making a community healthy and stable---as a fellow citizen---is funded and this builds the trust and connectivity in our communities. We can still be tough on crime---get the violent criminals and drug dealers out while creating this necessary structure. As well, when citizens see their community is being rebuilt with lots of small business and job opportunities they will leave the black market activities and integrate back into a local economy and communities will want to push those unrepentant criminal out by communicating with police more often.

Youth are angry because they have no voice, no community, no employment opportunities, and now even their schools are under attack and all this vents into violent actions against authority and police are the face of this authority. My platform addresses all of these problems and builds a public justice structure so citizens and youth can seek civil and criminal justice to resolve problems not feeling they need to resort to violence for justice.

***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?***

As I said, the current idea of community schools is the original public structure that existed for modern history---they are simply making all structures corporate non-profits. I will not continue the current structure for community schools---I will do the same in building all Baltimore City agencies out to each community, build a public school in each community, and build the public structure in each school with staff and resources available to classrooms and schools with non-profits augmenting this public structure.

***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,***



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*how will you approach making sure every child has the opportunity to grow up to become a healthy adult?*

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***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 every day safely?***

Students and parents are not always choosing to travel across town to a public school they see as better---they do it because they have no choice often in having no school or not having a funded and resourced school. I stated the commitment to each community having that school and each school funded and resourced equitably, staffed with everything a parent with a special needs, underserved, or advanced placement child would need. We have had magnate public schools in modern history that specialize in instruction whether vocational, the liberal arts, or special needs so this would be a natural in rebuilding a strong public school system. I am a strong public transportation candidate but do not want to see our youngest students having to ride an MTA system, some for two hours transferring from bus to subway or light rail just to get to a good school. Having school buses with routes geared to take those percentage of families choosing to send their child out of their community would be a start. My goal would be to see parents would feel the schools in and around their own communities are the ones they want their child to attend.

Parents are looking for a strong, broad curricula and rigor in the lessons. I will see every public school has just that. Parents are looking for a safe school environment. Rebuilding communities and economies creating stability and safe home and communities transfers this behavior into our schools as children will not come to school with behaviors of which parents feel afraid. Real community policing will have police categories allowing for exposure throughout the community and we can schedule this presence to be heavier during the trip to and from school. My police reforms will include gang policing strategy I feel will be more effective in downsizing the presence of gangs in communities.

Children feeling safe goes further than criminal activity. It comes with stability of people in their neighborhoods and staffing in their schools. When communities are stabilized so too are the citizens who once would hang out on street corners ; so too are the vacant lots where drug or gang activity might have existed; and gone are the dominance of liquor and convenience stores with more safe businesses into which a child can detour if needed.