



## 2014 GENERAL ASSEMBLY CANDIDATE SURVEY Candidate Comments

*For the 2014 Maryland CAPE Candidate Surveys, candidates were asked the questions below, exactly as they appear. Candidates were asked to state a position of either “support” or “oppose” to each question and were then given the option of issuing additional comments relative to each question in order to explain their position.*

*Please note that all candidates were issued reminders of the survey submission deadline and had ample and equal opportunity to respond. If candidates did not submit comments, they are not included on this form. “N/A” indicates that a candidate did not issue a comment relative to a particular question. All candidates’ respective “support” or “oppose” answers can be found by visiting [www.mdnonpubs.org/elections.html](http://www.mdnonpubs.org/elections.html).*

*\*\*\* Maryland CAPE does not endorse or oppose any candidate, under any circumstance, and no inference of endorsement or opposition should be concluded as a result of the information provided here.*

### CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

#### 1. NONPUBLIC TEXTBOOK PROGRAM

- Do you support or oppose maintaining at least \$6 million in funding in the state budget to provide textbooks and technology to students attending nonpublic schools in the state that charge tuition at or below the average public school per-pupil cost?

#### 2. BUSINESS TAX CREDITS FOR EDUCATION

- Do you support or oppose the creation of a state tax credit for business donations to organizations that assist both public and nonpublic school students with educational expenses?

**3. NONPUBLIC AGING SCHOOLS PROGRAM** - Do you support or oppose the nonpublic aging schools program, which provides \$3.5 million in state assistance directed toward aging nonpublic school facilities for infrastructural maintenance or security upgrades?

**4. TAX CREDITS FOR TEACHER CERTIFICATION** - Do you support or oppose providing nonpublic school teachers the same tax credit as currently provided to public school teachers to reimburse them for the cost of coursework needed to maintain or advance their state teacher certification?

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## District 1

### Jason C. Buckel (R) - 1B - House of Delegates

1. I believe strongly in maintaining or increasing this funding program.
2. N/A
3. Families of non-public school students deserve to have at least a portion of their tax dollars invested in school security for all students.
4. There is no logical reason to not extend this employment expense-reflected tax credit

### **Michael W. McKay (R) – 1C - House of Delegates**

1. As a parent who has chosen an alternative to public education for my children, I believe as a taxpayer that funding should be directed to these educational institutions.
2. N/A
3. N/A
4. N/A

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## **District 2**

### **Andrew Serafini (R) - 2A - House of Delegates**

1. It should be more.
2. I have been a co-sponsor.
3. N/A
4. N/A

### **Brett Wilson (R) – 2B - House of Delegates**

1. I support education alternatives for parents to find the "right fit" for their children.
2. N/A
3. It is a slippery slope to begin relying on state funds.
4. N/A

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## **District 3**

### **Victoria Wilkins (R) - 3A - House of Delegates**

1. While I support funding for nonpublic schools, until I examine the budget in detail, I cannot commit to a particular dollar figure.
2. N/A

3. N/A

4. N/A

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## District 4

### Gene Stanton (D) - 4 - House of Delegates

1. As an educator myself, I believe every child should have the opportunity for a quality education.
2. I think this is a wonderful Idea and I fully support it.
3. Provided the nonpublic schools are charging tuition at or below the average public school per child cost.
4. You would have my full support on all of these issues.

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## District 5

### Joseph M Getty (R) - 5 – Senate

1. As a member of the Senate Budget & Tax Committee in 2014, I supported the retention of these funds in the state budget.
2. This tax credit will help leverage private contributions for education excellence and engage businesses in supporting programs such as STEM education.
3. State support for capital projects is critical for maintaining facilities that support a strong educational environment for private schools.
4. Tax credits for teachers who spend personal resources to improve their students' educational opportunities should be available to all teachers and not be based on any distinction between public or private schools.

### Susan Krebs (R) - 5 - House of Delegates

1. Have always supported funding for non-public schools.
2. Have co-sponsored the BOAST legislation every year it has been introduced.
3. N/A
4. All teachers who work in our schools deserve the same tax credit regardless of whether they are public or private.

### **Dorothy Scanlan (D) - 5 - House of Delegates**

1. If this funding currently exists, then yes, I support continuing it.
2. I think this is a great idea! All schools need all the help they can get.
3. Since this fund has been created, I would continue to support it.
4. Yes!! Private school teachers (I was one for five years myself) should be eligible for the same tax credit as public school teachers if they take courses directly related to teaching.

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## **District 6**

### **Michael H. Weir, Jr. (D) - 6 - House of Delegates**

1. N/A
2. I have co-sponsored the legislation
3. N/A
4. N/A

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## **District 7**

### **Pete Definbaugh (D) - 7 - House of Delegates**

1. I would increase the funding. My children went to Calvert Hall and Towson Catholic. I understand the cost.
2. N/A
3. N/A
4. N/A

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## **District 8**

### **Katherine Klausmeier (D) - 8 – Senate**

1. I have done so in the past.
2. N/A

3. I have supported in the past for the Maryland School for the Blind. I'm not sure that I ever have had the opportunity to support \$3.5 million. How does that effect the public school construction? It's a discussion I would like to have.
4. N/A

#### **Eric Bromwell (D) - 8 - House of Delegates**

1. I have supported this for all of my 12 years in office.
2. N/A
3. N/A
4. N/A

#### **John Cluster (R) - 8 - House of Delegates**

1. We should be putting more towards this amount.
2. A great way for business to support education and help themselves.
3. Again this should be more but the democratic leadership in Annapolis will not allow it.
4. A teacher is a teacher whether in public or private schools and should be awarded the same benefits.

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## **District 9**

#### **Gail H. Bates (R) - 9 – Senate**

1. N/A
2. Have actually sponsored and co-sponsored the bill.
3. N/A
4. N/A

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## **District 10**

\*\*\* Although candidates submitted survey responses, no comments were offered by remaining District 10 candidates.

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## District 11

### Shelly Hettleman (D) - 11 - House of Delegates

1. N/A
2. If carefully crafted, I would support legislation that would enable businesses to receive a tax credit for donations provided to a non-profit organization that would then assist students with tuition and other educational expenses.
3. N/A
4. I understand that a \$1,500 tax credit is provided to public school teachers for graduate tuition related to state certification. If we are requiring all teachers to be certified, then I don't have a problem with allowing non-public school teachers to have the same tax credit.

### Dana Stein (D) - 11 - House of Delegates

1. N/A
2. Would depend on the language of the bill.
3. N/A
4. N/A

### Dan Morhaim (D) - 11 - House of Delegates

1. This item is in the state budget, and I have always voted for the budget, and therefore for this.
2. Would consider.
3. This item is in the state budget and I have always voted for the budget, and therefore for this.
4. Would consider.

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## District 12

### Eric Ebersole (D) - 12 - House of Delegates

1. In the interest of equity, public funding should be reserved for public schools, whose services are available to all citizens.

2. The introduction of incentives to businesses leaves the door for influence from special interests, some of whom might ultimately have goals that are not exclusively in the best interest of the students being educated.
3. N/A
4. Teachers, all of whom work for modest remuneration, need to be supported in their efforts to become more educated and better educators.

#### **Gordon Bull (R) - 12 - House of Delegates**

1. Without understanding the intricacies of this issue I must oppose it on the surface, but could be persuaded to support it if I knew more. Public funding means state influence, which I believe hurts nonpublic schools ability to educate students independently.
2. N/A
3. Again, if I know more on this issue I may change my position but I believe keeping nonpublic schools off state funding affords them autonomy they wouldn't otherwise have.
4. N/A

#### **Joseph Hooe (R) - 12 - House of Delegates**

1. I believe that we should do whatever it takes to educate all people.
2. N/A
3. N/A
4. N/A

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## **District 13**

#### **Danny Eaton (R) - 13 - House of Delegates**

1. N/A
2. I support a major simplification of the tax code and lower tax rates.
3. I need to learn more.
4. N/A

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## District 14

### **Karen S. Montgomery (D) - 14 – Senate**

1. Textbooks. Schools must provide equipment.
2. N/A
3. N/A
4. N/A

### **Patricia A. Fenati (R) - 14 - House of Delegates**

1. Without a detailed study on this subject, I am not sure of the amount I would recommend.
2. Students going to Private schools save the state millions of dollars. What would we lose in tax credits to expand that savings to the state?
3. Again, I am not sure of the amount without further information.
4. Of course!

### **Sharon Trexler Begosh (R) - 14 - House of Delegates**

1. Parents of students attending privately funded schools have had to foot the bill for public school as well as for their own children for far too long. They have been ignored by the State government. I would work to correct that.
2. The ability for a business to contribute to the education of students who are the future of the community that the business serves is a win-win situation. I am in favor of tax breaks that encourage individuals and businesses to choose where their money goes instead of being decided by bureaucrats in Annapolis.
3. Private schools promote school choice and encourage better educational experiences for students by supplying an alternative to the school attached to your address. These schools are part of the community and need to be supplemented with public funds at least in part.
4. For the same reasons as stated above, private schools should be treated as a valuable part of our community and afforded the same benefits. Elected officials are partial to the public schools which teach the curriculums they have authority over.



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## District 15

### Ed Edmundson (R) - 15 - House of Delegates

1. Improving our educational system is a top priority for me. This is not limited to public education. We are able to find money for many other programs -- our kids should be our top priority.
2. This is easy - this should pass in 2015. Who is against this?
3. Again, this is not a great deal of money. This is something every candidate should support.
4. Of course. Why discriminate?

### Christine Thron (R) - 15 - House of Delegates

1. N/A
2. N/A
3. N/A
4. In summary, I am fully supportive of school choice.

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## District 16

### Rose Li (R) - 16 - House of Delegates

1. I would rather have a set amount follow the child, which would promote competition, reduce overcrowding in public schools, and foster accountability. If a public school is not functioning well for whatever reason, parents should be able to access other viable options to help their children excel.
2. While the sentiment is laudable, I don't support complicating our tax structure by adding yet another tax credit or deduction. A better way is to lower corporate tax rates in Maryland for all businesses, freeing up funds that can be directed to more jobs and charitable giving.
3. It doesn't make sense to direct funds to private schools for infrastructural maintenance when our public schools need help. Instead, I support school choice and having funding follow the child, which will help ease overcrowding in public schools, promote competition, and better accommodate learning needs.
4. I see no reason to deny nonpublic school teachers this tax credit. All teachers should be encouraged to maintain or advance their qualifications because that helps them be better teachers, which in turn helps our children!

### **Marc Korman (D) - 16 - House of Delegates**

1. N/A
2. N/A
3. N/A
4. In general, as demonstrated by my answers, I believe state resources are too constrained for these types of expenditures. While I appreciate that many families choose, or must, send their children to private schools, I believe public policy must be focused on our public institutions.

### **John Andrews (R) - 16 - House of Delegates**

1. I strongly support the Nonpublic Student Textbook program, which is a small fraction of the assistance that many other states provide and vastly smaller than the roughly \$1.5 billion in spending that non-public schools save the state. To help parents at back-to-school time, I also support an expanded sales tax holiday for school supplies (including technology).
2. I strongly support the Maryland Education Tax Credit. None of the 25 existing state tax credits supports education. To help parents with educational expenses, I also support a state tax deduction for K-12 tuition as well as opportunity scholarships for low-income families.
3. I strongly support the Nonpublic Aging Schools program to guarantee children a safe and secure learning environment. This program is roughly 1% the size of Maryland's Public School Construction Program, but because of the cost efficiency of privately-contracted maintenance versus public school construction (not to mention the difference in per-pupil costs), this small expenditure results in large savings to taxpayers.
4. I strongly support extending this tax credit for an occupational expense to nonpublic as well as public school teachers; after all, these are members of the same profession and should be treated equally within the tax code.

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## **District 17**

### **Steven Zellers (R) - 17 – Senate**

1. N/A
2. N/A
3. N/A
4. Abstain

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## District 18

\*\*\* No candidates submitted survey responses for District 18

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## District 19

**Felix Ed Gonzalez II (R) - 19 – Senate**

1. N/A
  2. SUPPORT IT 100%
  3. SUPPORT WITH ACCOUNTABILITY.
  4. 100%
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## District 20

\*\*\* No candidates submitted survey responses for District 20.

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## District 21

**Katherine M. Butcher (R) - 21 - House of Delegates**

1. I support efforts to increase school choice for families. Parents choosing private schools for their children are paying taxes used for education, so their children should reap some benefits of those taxes.
  2. N/A
  3. N/A
  4. Many teachers choose to teach in a private school, even though pay may be lower, to work in an atmosphere more conducive to education. They should not be punished for this choice by an increased tax burden compared to public school teachers.
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## District 22

\*\*\* No candidates submitted survey responses for District 22.

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## District 23

\*\*\* Although candidates submitted survey responses, no comments were offered by remaining District 23 candidates.

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## District 24

\*\*\* Although candidates submitted survey responses, no comments were offered for District 24.

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## District 25

\*\*\* Although candidates submitted survey responses, no comments were offered by remaining District 25 candidates.

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## District 26

\*\*\* Although candidates submitted survey responses, no comments were offered for District 26.

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## District 27

### **Joe Crawford (R) - 27A - House of Delegates**

1. would support tax deductions or credits.
2. N/A
3. would support tax deductions or credits.
4. N/A

### **Philip A. Parenti (R) - 27B - House of Delegates**

1. I support school choice and believe the state should provide assistance when parents, particularly those who pay taxes, choose nonpublic education.
2. N/A
3. N/A
4. N/A

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## District 28

### **Thomas McLain Middleton (D) - 28 – Senate**

1. I have always supported this initiative.
2. N/A

3. N/A
4. N/A

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## District 29

### **Tony O'Donnell (D) – 29C - House of Delegates**

1. I have always supported the inclusion of this item in the state budget going back to the Glendenning administration in the 1990's.
2. I have co-sponsored and supported these types of tax credit bills, such as BOAST for a long time. I intend to continue my support.
3. We should support our private schools as a cost effective alternative to the public education system, which I also support.
4. Our commitment should be to quality education for ALL of the children regardless of their attendance in public, private or home schooled facilities and programs. Support of ALL teachers through tax credits to maintain and advance certification serves the best interests of ALL children.

### **Steve Waugh (R) - 29 – Senate**

1. My wife teaches at Leonard Hall Junior Naval Academy, a very small private school in St. Mary's county. I understand these challenges in a personal way.
2. N/A
3. N/A
4. N/A

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## District 30

\*\*\* Although candidates submitted survey responses, no comments were offered by remaining District 30 candidates.

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## District 31

### **Nic Kipke (R) - 31B - House of Delegates**

1. Strongly support.
2. Strongly support.

3. Strongly support.
4. Strongly support.

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## District 32

### Theodore Sophocleus (D) - 32 - House of Delegates

1. Voted accordingly
2. Voted accordingly
3. Voted accordingly
4. Voted accordingly

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## District 33

### Tony McConkey (R) - 33 - House of Delegates

5. N/A
6. I have co-sponsored the legislation in the past.
7. N/A
8. N/A

### Cathy Vitale (R) - 33 - House of Delegates

1. I support and my current record shows I am supportive.
2. Every dollar that helps schools, public and non-public is a benefit to our children.
3. Am supportive and have voted to support this program.
4. A teacher is a teacher regardless of where they teach. There should be no difference in the way they are supportive.

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## District 34

### Susan McComas (R) – 34B - House of Delegates

5. Consistently supported this since nonpublic schools provide a tremendous option for families and the public in school choice.
6. Supported in the past.
7. This is a very modest amount of funds to nonpublic schools. Very reasonable and fair.
8. This enables the nonpublic schools to compete with the public schools for the best teachers. Competition will make everyone perform better.

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## District 35

\*\*\* Although candidates submitted survey responses, no comments were offered by remaining District 35 candidates.

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## District 36

### Jeff Ghrist (R) - 36 - House of Delegates

1. I currently serve as President of the Caroline County Commissioners and we are struggling to find funding for both capital and operating expenses for our public school system. Non-public schools and home schooling saves local governments money and I fully support giving money back to the taxpayers who teach their children at home or send them to private school.
2. I support vouchers, education savings accounts, tax-credit scholarships and individual and business tax credits that support all schools. Please visit my website [www.jeffghrist.com](http://www.jeffghrist.com) to see my positions on education.
3. Non-public schools save local governments money. State aid for non-public school construction is critical.
4. Absolutely!

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## District 37

\*\*\* Although candidates submitted survey responses, no comments were offered by remaining District 37 candidates

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## District 38

### Mike McDermott (R) - 38 – Senate

1. N/A
2. All of these expenses should be tax deductible as well.
3. Allowing parents vouchers to choose for themselves the schools for their children would be even better.
4. There should be no difference in treatment.

### Norman H. Conway (D) - 38B - House of Delegates

1. I have supported the proposal to support funding for textbooks and technology for non-public schools for several years.
2. A good incentive for donations is a tax credit.
3. N/A
4. N/A

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## District 39

\*\*\* No candidates submitted survey responses for District 39.

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## District 40

### Barbara A. Robinson (D) - 40 - House of Delegates

1. N/A
2. N/A
3. Actually I would like to see the funding increase. I have seen some of the aging schools.
4. N/A



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## District 41

\*\*\* No candidates submitted survey responses for District 41.

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## District 42

### Chris West (R) – 42B – House of Delegates

1. I think this is a good idea but am not familiar with this line item in the current budget. If currently budgeted for that amount, I would support continuation. If not budgeted, I would have to weigh priorities.
  2. A credit suggests a dollar for dollar tax reduction. I would support a tax deduction but am not sure about a tax credit.
  3. N/A
  4. N/A
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## District 43

\*\*\* Although candidates submitted survey responses, no comments were offered for District 43.

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## District 44

### Shirley Nathan-Pulliam (D) - 44 – Senate

1. Yes, I supported this current budget and so supported the funding.
  2. N/A
  3. Yes, I supported this current budget and so supported the funding.
  4. N/A
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## District 45

### Rick Saffery (R) - 45 - House of Delegates

1. My preference is to abolish compulsory attendance. Parents and legal guardians would fully fund their children's education without current burden of taxation levied for this purpose.
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2. I'd prefer the clause "and" be replaced with "or". The stipulation that a business must support both seems burdensome and counter-productive.
3. I support this so long as taxes are not raised to accommodate the funding.
4. I support this so long as taxes are not raised to accommodate the funding. Additionally, this credit must not introduce more government intrusion between educator and student, the curriculum, or any other activity material to such endeavor.

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## District 46

### **Roger Bedingfield (R) - 46 - House of Delegates**

1. I believe that once you attach strings via state funding, the independence of the school would be compromised. I believe that there are other avenues for funding assistance.
2. Absolutely. My biggest push would be for a school voucher program. This would allow for private schools to be funded at the same level the state schools are.
3. As stated above, the more the state is directly involved, the less independent schools are.
4. It would only be fair.

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## District 47

\*\*\* Although candidates submitted survey responses, no comments were offered for District 47.

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**END**