



**Anne Arundel County Chapter | Maryland**  
health, safety and equity in education

Election Candidate School Hours Questionnaire

Please return to: [sslaaco@gmail.com](mailto:sslaaco@gmail.com)

Candidate Name: **Pete Smith**

The American Academy of Pediatrics, American Medical Association, American Academy of Sleep Medicine, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and other public health groups recommend that middle and high school start no earlier than 8:30 a.m. These experts base their recommendation on numerous studies that connect changing adolescent sleep patterns and early school start times to lower academic achievement, negative physical and mental health conditions, and risky behaviors among teens.

A 2014 Start Time Task Force by Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) recommended several potential options to improve school hours, and in February 2015, the County Council unanimously passed Resolution 6-15 urging AACPS to follow the recommendations of its 2014 Task Force and “expeditiously take measures to establish safe and healthy high school hours for all students.”

Despite shifting start times by 13-15 minutes this year, AACPS and the Board of Education have thus far been unable to fully implement safe, healthy, and age-appropriate school hours. Therefore, Start School Later Anne Arundel County asks:

1. Will you sign Start School Later’s 2017 petition at <https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/establish-safe-and-healthy-school-hours-in-anne-arundel-county> ?

If No, will you sign it? If you won’t sign it, please explain why.

**Yes. I Co-Sponsor on the resolution that asked the School System to consider this adjustment, and I voted for the funding used to address the start time.**

2. Based on the research that later middle and high school start times increase graduation rates and decrease absenteeism, with disadvantaged students benefiting the most from age-appropriate school hours, do you feel the current school hours affects the County’s ability to be a leader in K-12 education for all students?

**There are many layers that affect the needs and outcome of students within our K-12 system. School start times are just one piece of that dynamic that should be looked and factored. I would ask the school system to answer the question, if budget was not an issue, what would they believe is the best schedule for students.**

3. What hours would you define as healthy, safe, and age appropriate for:

**I am not a doctor, but I believe the science speaks for itself. I would encourage the hours be adjusted to meet scientific data driven recommendations.**

Elementary School:

Middle School:

High School:

4. In your prior experience and positions, what have you done to ensure all Anne Arundel County Public School students (K-12) have healthy, safe, and age appropriate school hours?

**I voted for the resolution to initiate the school start time and voted in the budget to add funding to the program in order to meet the software needs of shifting and managing the bus system.**

5. In your elected position, what will you do to ensure healthy and safe school hours for all of Anne Arundel County Public School Students? Please be specific: Resolutions, recommendations, funding requests, educational outreach, implementation efforts, etc.

**Continue to focus and listen to the experts on recommended adjustments needed to support the changes in the schedule.**

6. What is your timeframe for your actions in Question 5? Please be specific, Fiscal Year, School Year, etc.

The County Council has the ability to affect the budget once a year during the May/June timeframe. I would work **with the School Board and Superintendent to ensure funding is available to address their concerns. Fiscal Year 2019 will be approved this June and will push to ensure gaps in funding are addressed to accommodate adequate start times.**

7. Is there anything else you would like your constituents and future voters to know about your position on safe, healthy, and age-appropriate school hours?

**That I will continue to support efforts to improve every aspect of our school system to ensure our kids are prepared for the global world we live in. School start times is a component of the overall healthy state of students and scientific data driven decisions should be supported to enhance their lives.**