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

Election Candidate School Hours Questionnaire

Please return to: sslaaco@gmail.com

Candidate Name: _____**Amanda Fiedler**_____

Start School Later Anne Arundel County met with Ms. Fiedler on April 24, 2018.

Ms. Fiedler is very supportive of the science and related some memories of her personal struggles with early high school hours.

Her primary concerns are financial and community related. She'd like to see a reasonable fiscal proposal for healthy and safe school hours, given the other pressing fiscal needs of the County. She would also like to see the community engaged with the implementation process, to ensure community feedback and suggestions are incorporated where appropriate, in any changes to school hours. She suggested co-hosting with the Board of Education and SSL, potential discussion(s) in District 5 to ensure her constituents' voices are heard.

SSL AACO suggested that another role for the County Council (beyond approving any monetary requests for safe and healthy school hours), would be engaging with the Department of Health in the County Council's role as the Board of Health, to get a formal opinion on school hours. Ms. Fiedler agreed that there is merit in that idea and will consider it further.

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.

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?

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

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?

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.

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

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?