



**Maryland | Statewide**

health, safety and equity in education

## BOE General Election Candidate School Hours Questionnaire

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

Candidate Name: Karla Silvestre, At-large member

**1. 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 agree that MCPS high schools should start at 8:30 am or later?**

I am willing to bring this to the Board and Superintendent for consideration. I was not on the Board when this issue was last acted upon. Therefore, I need to become familiar with the research, parent input from our diverse community/various parts of the county, why it was supported/opposed by some the last time it was discussed by the Board, what are the implications for working families/working students, and how it will impact our hiring and retention of staff affected by this change. Having said that, I am the parent of a 15-year-old in our system and see how this could be beneficial her overall wellbeing.

**2. Are you willing to commit to work toward funding a comprehensive transportation study during your first 100 days in office to look at all transportation resources the county**

**has available, in addition to MCPS school buses, to achieve healthy bell times?**

I am committed to requesting a cost estimate for what a study would cost. The MCPS budget is released in December and is approved in March of 2023. Therefore, if there is consensus (5 or more) on the Board that this is a priority at this time for the district, then funding could be included in the FY24 budget. As with all issues, a single board member cannot insert a funding request on the budget. It is important to note that MCPS is putting out an RFP this school year to upgrade its bus routing software. This is a necessary first step before conducting any analysis.

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

During a recent mental health update during a Board meeting, I reminded the administration that they should be looking at what other districts are doing in terms of later start times as a wellness strategy for our students.