

# BALTIMORE COUNTY STUDENT COUNCILS PLATFORM

## **Plank I - Education**

*The Baltimore County Student Councils supports:*

- A. Diversity in school curricula to allow for specified areas of study.
- B. A weighted grading system including the recognition of honors and gifted and talented courses on report cards, transcripts and course syllabi.
- C. The enforcement of academic eligibility requirements for participation in co-curricular activities.
- D. Programs that promote computer literacy and technological education in addition to and as a part of the development of fundamental elementary goals.
- E. Early intervention programs that enable all children to start school ready to learn.
- F. The encouragement of students towards voluntary involvement within the community.
- G. Secondary magnet programs.
- H. The implementation of leadership training classes in all secondary schools.
- I. A weight of no more than 12% for a final exam towards a final grade.
- J. Students not being penalized for excused absences from school for approved activities.
- K. Foreign language classes beginning in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade.
- L. The necessary passing of all HSA tests in order to graduate high school.
- M. Raising the legal school dropout age from 16 to 18 years of age.
- N. Implementation of the AVID program in all secondary Baltimore County Public Schools.

*The Baltimore County Student Councils opposes:*

- A. Year round schooling.
- B. State legislators mandating curriculum.
- C. Any class greater than 30 students.
- D. In-school punishment for out-of-school behavior.

### **Plank II - Youth Representation**

*The Baltimore County Student Councils supports:*

- A. Appointment of student members to the Board of Education of Baltimore County and the Maryland State Board of Education.
- B. Designation of the student members to the Board of Education of Baltimore County and the Maryland State Board of Education as full voting members.
- C. Appointment of student representatives on private sector boards and commissions which deal with youth related issues at the local, county and state levels.
- D. Creation and/or continuation of student government programs in all elementary and secondary schools in Baltimore County under the guidance of a qualified faculty advisor.
- E. The appointment and fair compensation of advisors to support the empowerment and representation of students.

### **Plank III - Funding**

*The Baltimore County Student Councils supports:*

- A. Full local, state and federal funding for programs mandated for implementation in Baltimore County Public Schools.
- B. Consistency of resources across the county.
- C. Proportionate funding to meet the needs for all areas of study.

*The Baltimore County Student Councils opposes:*

- A. Any voucher program that would use public money to fund private school education.
- B. Any proposal for the creation and implementation of a program that does not outline how it will be funded.

#### **Plank IV - School Personnel**

*The Baltimore County Student Councils supports:*

- A. The availability of trained health professionals in all Baltimore County Public Schools.
- B. Full staffing for the purpose of assisting students with special needs.
- C. The hiring and placement of guidance counselors and school nurses based upon school populations, not a countywide standard.
- D. The hiring of one additional qualified staff member per school to focus completely on substitute teaching.

#### **Plank V - Building Maintenance and School Safety**

*The Baltimore County Student Councils supports:*

- A. Increased funding for general renovations of schools.
- B. Adequate custodial staffing for all Baltimore County Public Schools.
- C. Healthy school environments for all students.
- D. Increased parking for faculty, staff and students at schools where needed.
- E. Implementation of methods to prevent school vandalism.
- F. School Resource Officers in all Baltimore County Public Schools
- G. Assigned police officers in school parking lots at the opening and closing of every school day.

## **Plank VI - Health and Student Safety**

*The Baltimore County Student Councils supports:*

- A. Student organizations that use peer leadership in the prevention of emotional and physical abuse.
- B. Support services for the prevention and treatment of verbal and emotional abuse in Baltimore County Public Schools.
- C. Peer counseling programs in schools.
- D. The establishment of "wellness networks" in the community.
- E. Publicized resources for students in need of confidential support.
- F. Implementation of healthy food choices in Baltimore County Public Schools.
- G. Efforts to prevent teen suicide.

## **Plank VII - Substance Abuse**

*The Baltimore County Student Councils supports:*

- A. Compliance with existing laws which prohibit alcohol consumption by persons under the age of 21 years and which prohibit cigarette smoking by persons under the age of 18.
- B. Continued education in all Baltimore County Public Schools on the problems and dangers of different types of controlled and illegal substances focusing on the biological and social hazards and effects of their use.
- C. Continued support of "smoke free schools" and the establishment of smoking cessation clinics to assist students and staff in all Baltimore County Public Schools.
- D. Full funding of state and local programs to eliminate substance abuse among students.
- E. The availability of wellness centers as a source of information and treatment for students.
- F. Student organizations and services for the prevention of substance abuse and all other destructive decisions in every secondary school in Baltimore County.

- G. A mandatory suspension for students caught smoking, drinking, abusing a controlled substance or carrying any of the previously mentioned items while under the jurisdiction of the school system.
- H. Drug testing for all students who participate on an athletic team in Baltimore County Public Schools.
- I. Distribution of information about the problems and dangers of substance abuse among teens in every Baltimore County Public Schools secondary school.
- J. Continued education regarding current drunk driving laws.
- K. Extending the amount of time an underage driver's license would be suspended for driving under the influence.

*The Baltimore County Student Councils opposes:*

- A. The searching and drug testing of students based on unsubstantiated rumors.

### **Plank VIII - Teenage Pregnancy, Family Planning and Sexually Transmitted Diseases**

*The Baltimore County Student Councils supports:*

- A. Distribution of factual information, the development of communication, and decision-making skills.
- B. Full and effective implementation and support of required family life and human development courses.
- C. Curriculum that teaches principles of safe sex and contraception.
- D. Availability of condoms in Baltimore County secondary schools with appropriate support.
- E. Employment of teachers who are qualified to teach family life and human development courses.
- F. Continuation of STD prevention education in high school and an increased amount of STD prevention education at the middle school level.
- H. Health courses providing adequate information about family planning,

human development and general wellness as a Maryland state graduation requirement.

### **Plank IX - Environment**

*The Baltimore County Student Councils supports:*

- A. Continuation of environmentally sound schools.
- B. Energy conservation programs at the facility and instructed levels.
- C. The inclusion of environmental programs in Baltimore County Public Schools as options for summer programs, school clubs, internships, community center programs and student activities.
- D. Limiting the use of harmful chemicals on school properties where students learn, play or convene for any reason.
- E. The minimization of waste products within the schools and the maximization of reusing and recycling of used materials.
- F. The use of provided bus transportation.
- G. The encouragement of carpooling for driving students as well as faculty and staff.
- H. A comprehensive Green Schools program in all Baltimore County Public Schools.

### **Plank X - Civic Responsibility**

*The Baltimore County Student Councils supports:*

- A. The establishment of programs that encourage youth to participate in civic oriented activities.
- B. The distribution of voter registration forms in 12th grade social studies classes.
- C. Efforts by student organizations to donate time and money to charitable causes.

*Revised April 15, 2010*