

Maryland Youth Advisory Council
Baltimore County Community Conversation
January 27, 2017
Towson High School
5:00 – 7:00 pm

Assets and Strengths in Baltimore County		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scouts • Riding horses • Strong Student Member of the Board • Zach Caplan • Deavon – Page in Annapolis • Extra-curricular activities • Strong academics • Resource Officers – Off. Feidler • School counselors • Diversity • Churches • Youth leadership opportunities • Medical center • Key Club – volunteer opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interact Club – community service • Libraries • Parks • YMCAs • HOA’s - ie Roger’s Forge • Environmental awareness • Student Government • Honor’s societies • Law and Public Policy Program – Towson High • Mr. Jockmons • Good plumbing in neighborhoods • Walkable (Towson area) • Bus system – MTA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports programs • New Construction • Sports fields • Mall • Towson University • Mr. Ridgley • Mr. Dase • Ms. White • Model Legislative Programs • Job opportunities/internships • Call-a-thon – literary magazine • Music programs

Problems, Issues, and Concerns in the Community		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology and computers are not the answer to everything v • Drug use in school and drug deals – only 1 day on drugs in health class vvvvvv • Poor Sex Education programs – contraception and LGBTQ issues not addressed vvvvvvvv • Bathroom Access for transgender or non-binary students vv • Testing on computers vvV • More counselors needed v • Outdated or incomplete textbooks • Dress code policies • More focus on mastery vs grades vv • Year-long school • Poor math departments vvV • More focus on independent study vs homework v • School workload does not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More practical curriculum v • More caring teachers • Updated and modern application of curriculum – science and tech vvV • Preparing students for school – time management – in elementary school • Students choose AP classes and grades vs electives with life skills v • Lack of long-term subs v • SAT prep is not rigorous vvV • Academic pressure vvvvvv • Focus on testing scores • No places to go afterschool • New grading policies vvvvvvvvvv • More support through counselors and opportunities • Removing GT – pushing to AP and Honors • Less funding for STEM vv • School buses – routes and # 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More environmentally-friendly schools vvV • Lack of sleep vvvV • Healthier school meals vvV • Minority representation in leadership and educations based on student population vvvvvvvvvv • Later school start times vvV • Depression – access to services and support completing school work vvvvv • School after labor day – shorter breaks and cancelled school trips v • Need for a free period during school day vvvvvv • Longer lunch period vvV • Improved school infrastructure vvvvvvv • More funding and staff for special education programs vvv • Increased internet access v

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make space for activities • More life skills classes (taxes, home economics, budgeting) vvvvvvvvvvvvvv • Different school schedules – longer periods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • of bus rides needed vV • No interviews or vetting for magnet programs • Lack of funding for arts and music – teachers paying for instruments 	
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Prioritized Issue Areas
1. Life skills classes available in school

Causes of Lack of life skills classes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of funding for classes – cooking • Stigma to take home economics or cooking • Lack of credit incentives • Lack of relevant classes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not discussing current events • use of older books that do not connect with today’s students • Macro or Micro economics does not equal personal economics (taxes, budgeting, etc) • Lack of parent engagement/involvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents not responsible for children’s learning • Parents need learning opportunities along with students • Parents do not have the knowledge to share with their children • Not offering stand-alone courses – life skills material is mixed in other subjects • Lack of common sense application of curriculum • Required vs non-required for graduation • Lack of access to resources and relationships to succeed outside of school • Too much focus on academics • Lack of focus on positive relationships

Solutions for lack of life skills classes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create real-life applications for subjects • Create opportunities for parent engagement teach personal responsibility • Less focus on tests • Provide more funding for life skills classes and staff • Implement student-driven learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students what they want to learn and know • Redirect technology funding – provide laptops to students most in need and not just to everyone • Graduation requirement vs elective decision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a requirement, but an option to test out • Replace SAT prep with life skills course • Work with the General Assembly and Boards of Education to support home economic/life skills classes • Develop and offer philosophy classes in K-12 to allow students to develop their own set of morals • Guidance counselors better promote life skills classes during registration periods • Focus on AP/Honors/college-level courses - if take standard-level courses college entry is impacted • Offering an 8 period school schedule allows for more class options • Allow for classes off-site for credit • Allow for independent study formats that are student guided learning • Encouraging students to learn how to learn, how to study, effective time management skills • Reduce the pressure to take high-level courses