Good morning/afternoon Frederick County, I am Michael Olson, it is great to see everyone in-person today and it is a great honor to have this opportunity to tell you about myself, some of the issues I am passionate about, and how I will represent you if elected Student Member of the Board.

To begin I would like to tell you a little about my past in student advocacy. I began attending Board, PTSA, and student government meetings in middle school. After entering high school amidst the pandemic, student advocacy became even more important to me. I attended events held by Maryland Association of Student Councils (MASC) and networked online with student governments across the state. In the spring of 2021 I was appointed Evaluations Coordinator for MASC, a role I still hold, in which I look over hundreds of responses from Maryland students for ways to improve MASC events.

Moving forward, let me tell you about some of the issues I want to address if elected SMOB. Mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression have become a serious epidemic in our schools. Currently the county is dealing with these issues through SEL lessons, however they fall ineffective most of the time. This is in part because the county isn’t providing teachers with the resources needed to start conversations about mental health. We also need more investments in school psychologists as well as improving the student-to-counselor ratio. Another issue I want to address is social inequality by exploring methods to end ignorance and bigotry to make our schools welcoming to everyone striving for a world class education. There is so much more I want to discuss with students including the learning gap in ELA and Maths, building infrastructure, geographic access to materials, lunch options, assistive technology for disabled students, and standardized testing.

I look forward to meeting more students throughout my campaign so we can discuss more about what I hope to do for FCPS. Thank you for your time.