
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF LABOR TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 438

TO: Members of the Ways and Means & Government, Labor, and Elections Committees
FROM: Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor)
DATE: February 11, 2026
BILL: Adult Prison School Board Model Development Committee

MD LABOR POSITION: INFORMATION

HB438 establishes an Adult Prison School Board Model Committee (“Committee”) tasked with developing a comprehensive plan for a school board (“School Board”) to oversee correctional education for the adult and juvenile justice systems.

The Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor)’s Office of Correctional Education (OCE) provides educational services in Maryland’s prisons. Specifically, OCE provides basic academic (including English language classes and GED preparation), occupational, and transitional program support for Incarcerated Individuals (IIs) to prepare them for successful employment and a positive transition when they are released, and therefore would be subject to the School Board created by the Committee outlined in the bill.

There are two already existing, statutorily mandated committees tasked with researching and issuing guidance on the delivery of correctional education services; consequently, the establishment of a separate Committee to study a School Board may be premature.

Correctional education programming is already subject to oversight by the statutorily mandated (MD Code, Labor and Employment, [§11-901](#)) [Correctional Education Council \(CEC\)](#). This council, co-chaired by MD Labor and the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS), with staff from MD Labor, regularly meets to advise both agencies on many aspects of correctional education. Specifically, the CEC must:

1. Develop and recommend an educational and workforce training program for each correctional institution to meet the needs of the inmate population;
2. Adopt regulations for all correctional institutions for the implementation of mandatory education and workforce skills training programs;
3. Actively advocate and promote interest in education and workforce skills training opportunities within correctional institutions;
4. Ensure quality education and workforce skills training are available to inmates; Review educational and workforce skills training programs at correctional institutions, including curriculum, resource materials, supplies, and instruction;
5. Recommend and advocate for improvements to the educational and workforce skills training programs;
6. Meet quarterly; and
7. Submit an annual activities report to the Governor on or before October 30.

Additionally, the Department notes that the submission deadline for the report outlined in HB438 overlaps with deadlines for similar reports requested by the MGA. The currently operating [Prison Education Delivery Reform Commission](#) (PEDR) is tasked with researching and making

recommendations about educational delivery in Maryland prisons, including “best practices” for these education systems. The PEDR reports are both due in 2029, which is *after* the 2028 report submission dates established by the bill. While the PEDR *may* recommend a School Board, it would not do so until after the Committee established by HB438 has already developed a full *plan* for a School Board.

MD Labor welcomes discussions about how to strengthen the delivery of correctional education services and respectfully requests the Committee consider this information as they evaluate HB438. For questions, please contact Andrew Fulginiti at Andrew.Fulginiti@maryland.gov.