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**TO:** House Ways and Means Committee

**BILL:** House Bill (HB) 438 - Adult Prison School Board Model Development Committee

**DATE:** February 11, 2026

**POSITION:** Letter of Information

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The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is providing information regarding House Bill 438, which establishes the Adult Prison School Board Model Development Committee to create a comprehensive plan for a school board system overseeing correctional education for individuals in the criminal and juvenile justice systems. MSDE shares the State's commitment to advancing the quality and effectiveness of educational programs in these facilities, recognizing the profound role such learning plays in supporting successful reentry into society.

In considering HB 438, it is important to recognize that both juvenile and adult correctional education programs currently operate under established governance structures that provide oversight and support. Since 2022, the [Juvenile Services Education Program and Board](#) has operated as an independent unit within the Department of Juvenile Services. A representative of the State Superintendent of Schools is a member of the Board. Within the State Department of Labor, the [Correctional Education Council](#), is a 14 member council established to develop and monitor educational and workforce training for each correctional institution in the Division of Corrections. These programs operate with a combination of state and federal sources.

Both the Juvenile Services Education Program and Board and the Correctional Education Council should be directly involved in assessing the potential impacts of combining programs for youth and adults under one administrative board. MSDE requests further clarity on how a joint committee, as described in HB 438, would complement these existing governance structures and the specific role the Adult Prison School Board Model Development Committee would play in addition to the work already being carried out.

MSDE cares deeply about the quality of education in correctional facilities and believes strongly in the crucial role of education for citizens seeking to re-enter society. This is an area that the State can always improve. However, given the proposed scope of work - spanning education programming for youth and adults, and involving three State agencies - implementation would require dedicated resources to analyze and plan the development of a model oversight framework, some of which could duplicate work already managed by existing governance bodies.

MSDE respectfully requests consideration of these comments as HB 438 is discussed and deliberated. For further information, please contact Laurel Cratsley, Interim Executive Director of Government Affairs, at 443-571-5461 or [Laurel.Cratsley@maryland.gov](mailto:Laurel.Cratsley@maryland.gov).