

**Correctional Education Council (CEC) Board Meeting Minutes**  
**November 21, 2025**  
**Google Meet**

**Council Members**

Secretary Carolyn J. Scruggs, Co-Chair, Deputy Secretary Jason Perkins-Cohen, Jack Weber, Jennifer Gauthier, Ruschelle Reuben, Dr. Kathleen M. Jordan-D'Ambrisi , Sarah Sheppard, Lyndsay Silva, Mary Ann Thompson, Rachael Stephens Parker

**Staff and Guests**

Alexandra Pereira, Alyssa Webster, Anne Bocchini Pack, Benjamin Mourad, Brittney Hansen, Chanel Viator, Cynthia Blackwell, Danielle Cox, Ellen Bredt, Erica DuBose, Francisco Vega, Henry Franklin Jr, Ikea Barnes, Janell Johnson, Jay Miller, Jennifer Swiech, Jessica Johnson, John Feaster III, Kari Pompilii, Kathleen, Kenneth Jessup, Mark Smith, Melissa Volpe, Patrick Hruz, Peggy DallAcqua, Renard Brooks, Tamara Barron, Tanja Murphy, Tawanda Redding, Terenda Thomas, Tyneshia Heath

**Absent**

Rachel Stephens Parker, Lyndsay Silva, Jennifer Gauthier

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Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor) Deputy Secretary, Jason Perkins-Cohen called the meeting to order at 2:33 p.m.

During the opening comments, Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) Secretary, Carolyn J. Scruggs highlighted major improvements in staffing, reporting steady hiring gains working steadily toward the consistent operation of facility educational programs impacted by the officer shortage. She emphasized the importance of expanding gender-responsive vocational opportunities for women at MCIW to support successful reentry. The council expressed strong appreciation for the department's progress..

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from July 28th were reviewed and approved unanimously.

**Annual Report Review**

Director Reuben led a comprehensive review of the annual report, outlining progress in instructional quality, program accessibility, reentry-focused outcomes, and occupational training. The report highlighted increases in GED attainment, growth in special education services, rising industry-recognized credentials, strengthened library programming, and expanded transitional support intended to prepare individuals for reentry. The report also emphasized new data efforts, including closer coordination with partners such as the Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center.

Director Cox led a review on updates to several new initiatives, including virtual reality automotive training, mobile commercial drivers licenses training simulator trailers in partnership with community colleges, and expanded post-secondary opportunities across multiple institutions. They also described reentry-oriented programs such as peer mentoring, post-release education pathways, and workforce preparation supports.

Council members raised questions about post-release employment data, special education enrollment and refusals, and the appropriate use of Perkins funding. **The group agreed that employment outcome tracking and a more detailed breakdown of the special education population should be incorporated into next year's report.** The report was approved with one minor name correction and on the condition of a brief legal citation review, after which it may be submitted unless further changes are identified.

### **Professional Learning Update**

Deputy Director Johnson provided a detailed update on ongoing professional learning efforts introduced last July designed to strengthen instructional quality across correctional education. She outlined a systemwide focus on planning and delivering high-quality instruction grounded in concrete training for leaders, including learning to take literal observation notes, identify high-impact teaching strategies, apply effective adult-learning methods, evaluate the appropriateness of instructional materials, and conduct coaching conversations following classroom visits. Quarterly instructional rounds, a streamlined one-page lesson-planning template, Smartboard training, and structured school improvement planning all contributed to building consistent and effective instructional practices across institutions in the first half of fiscal year 26.

She emphasized that all decisions are increasingly driven by data, including a new bi-monthly student-tracking tool that identifies who is progressing, who needs intervention, and who is ready to test. Upcoming work will deepen leaders' use of data protocols and expand training in equitable instructional practices. In addition, CE is also incorporating student feedback to strengthen classroom effectiveness.

Finally, Dr. Johnson addressed enrollment, noting that over half of institutions are at or above capacity, with most others approaching full enrollment through increased outreach, mass testing, and coordination with case management.

### **Concluding Remarks (Deputy Secretary Perkins-Cohen & Secretary Scruggs)**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:24 p.m.