**Correctional Education Council (CEC) Board Meeting Minutes**

**March 14, 2022**

**Google Meet & Conference Call**

**Council Members**

Deputy Secretary Dave McGlone, Secretary Robert Green, Jack Weber, Danielle Cox, Secretary James Fielder, Michele Savage, Michael DiGiacomo, Sarah Sheppard

**Staff and Guests**

Andre James, Ann D. Seyle, Bill Gaertner, Brittney Hansen, Carolyn Scruggs, Casey Tiefenwerth, Crystal Flemming- Brice, Cynthia Blackwell, Dylan McDonough, Deron Crawford, Ellen Bredt, Ellie Marts, Edward W. Schwabeland, Francisco J. Vega, Henry Franklin, James Grossman, Janay Harris, Jennifer Gauithier, June Brittingham, James E. Rzepkowski, Jack Weber, Dr. Jack Cunning, Keith Roys, Kari Pompilli, Kenneth Jessup, Kimberly Stewart, Kathering Lander, Laura Martin, Lauren Gilwee, Lloyd Day, Leza Griffith, Marsha Briley, Marshall M. Lawrence, Matthew McKinney, Mary Keller, Patrick Hruz, Peggy Stanford, Richard McCarthy, Tricia Hopkins, Dr. Tamara Barron

**Absent**

Antoine Payne, Dr. Erica Dubose

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Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor) Deputy Secretary Dave McGlone called the meeting to order at 10:0\_ a.m. A quorum was reached.

**Welcome**

MD Labor Deputy Secretary Dave McGlone welcomed attendees to the meeting and thanked everyone for taking time out of their busy schedules to participate.

**Updates from Deputy Secretary McGlone**

**Community Partner Updates**

Deputy Secretary Dave McGlone introduced Bill Gaertner, the founder of the Gatekeepers organization.

* Bill Gaertner introduced himself and spoke about how he was incarcerated late in his life at the age of 61. While incarcerated Bill realized that he had “failed the business of living (a concept that emphasizes a life that radiates impact and influence) by going into the penal system”. Mr. Gaertner shared that it was that realization that turned his life around. When he was released he founded the Gatekeepers organization to assist other incarcerated individuals turn their life around and to motivate, empower and encourage ex-offenders through the Job Readiness Training Program.
* Bill Gaertner introduced his business partner, Keith Roys to talk about some of the projects that Gatekeeper is currently working on.
* Keith Roys announced the rollout of their “Business of Living” workbook in both physical and virtual formats. The virtual workbook will be made available to Maryland offenders through the tablet program and covers 4 major life areas that are key to reconstructing life as an ex-offender; occupational, educational, personal and spiritual.
* The Business of Living workbook prompts individuals to identify what their goals are in each of those 4 categories and develop strategies to reach those goals utilizing resources that are available to them during their incarceration so that they can develop a re-entry plan and are ready to re-enter their communities when the time comes.
* Keith Roys shared that Notre Dame’s Lab for Economic Opportunity (LEO) has proposed to partner with the Gatekeepers organization to provide rigorous statistical analysis on the programs effectiveness and its impact on the recidivism rate. This partnership will begin within the next couple months.
* The Gatekeepers organization was recently awarded a state grant of $110,000 which will go towards serving the re-entered population and meeting their basic needs.

**Correctional Education Updates**

Danielle Cox, Director of Correctional Education (CE) at MD Labor’s Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning (DWDAL), thanked Bill Gaertner for all of his hard work and for sharing it with the council. Danielle Cox then opened the floor for staff to share CE updates concerning staff vacancies, GED numbers, Special Education, Career and Technical Education (CTE), and transitional programming.

**Staff Vacancies (Dr. Jack Cunning)**

Jack Cunning, Field Director of CE at MD Labor’s DWDAL

* The following position have been filled since the last CEC meeting on December 13, 2021:
  + Occupational Plumbing teacher at Western Correctional Institution (WCI)
  + Adult Basic Education (ABE) teacher at Patuxent
  + Special Education teacher at Jessup Correctional Institution (JCI)
* The following positions have candidates identified and are waiting for DPSCS background checks to be completed:
  + Principal at Maryland Correctional Institution- Hagerstown (MCI-H)
  + Librarian at Maryland Correctional Institution- Jessup (MCI-J)
  + Special Education teacher at Maryland Correctional Training Center (MCTC)
  + Office Secretary 3 position at Roxbury Correctional Institution (RCI)
* The following positions have candidates and interviews will be scheduled shortly
  + Graphic arts instructor at Western Correctional Institution (WCI)
  + School Psychologist at Headquarters
  + Special Education teacher at Eastern Correctional Institution- East (ECI-E)
* The following positions are posted at the present time:
  + Warehousing Instructor at Occupational Skills Training Center (OSTC)
  + Electrical Instructor at Maryland Correctional Training Center (MCTC)
  + Auto Mechanic Instructor at Maryland Correctional Training Center (MCTC)
* There are a total of 6 vacant positions at the present time.

**Academic Updates (Patrick Hruz)**

Patrick Hruz, Academic Coordinator of Correctional Education (CE) at MD Labor’s DWDAL,

reported on academic updates.

* TABLET Program updates:
  + During the COVID Pause from late December 2021 to mid-February 2022 Tablet Training Professional Development Training was provided to all teachers Statewide.
    - Group 1 (MCTC/MCTC- Hill, MCIH, RCI, JCI, MCIW, BCCC, MTC, and OSTC) received extensive training on uploading files (documents and videos) to their Learning Management System (LMS). This training was followed up with providing all teachers access to instructional videos and step-by-step direction documents.
      * The LMS platform will allow each teacher the ability to include any educational materials on the tablet that may not be accessible by the existing tablet software or programs.
* Integrated Education and Training (IET) Pilot Program Updates:
  + The IET Manufacturing program at MCTC Hill partnered Hagerstown Community College (HCC) is currently in the second semester of a two-semester program.
    - Students are taking the following course at Hagerstown Community College (HCC):
      * ADM 201 Lean Manufacturing & Quality Assurance
      * ELE 110 Fundamentals of Electricity
      * Opportunity for Forklift Certification
    - Students will work toward completion of the following:
      * ASC 4 Certification
      * GED
  + The shorter program at Maryland Correctional Institution for Women (MCI-W)has successfully resumed since the COVID pause with students making progress toward both the GED and the Industry Skills/Credentials.
    - Special thanks to DPSCS who has been supportive and helpful in navigating these pilot programs.
    - Correctional Education, along with the Technical Assistance Team from the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) has and continues to learn a lot through the national “Integrated Education & Training in Corrections” Technical Assistance Pilot Program.
      * Maryland is 1 of 6 state programs that are providing feedback to OCTAE with “lessons learned”, successes, challenges, and ideas so that they can provide guidance to future IET programs in Corrections.
* Academic Progress Data
  + As of Friday, March 11, 2022, 85 students have earned their GED
    - This number has increased from 73 students as of December 13, 2021 despite the limited access to face to face instruction due to complications presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.
  + There is currently a pass rate of 74% which is a percentage point greater than the National Average of 73%.
  + 7% of students who earned their GED are “College REady” and 2% are “College Ready + College Credit”
  + GED testing updates:
    - 72 students have passed one part of the GED test.
    - 59 students have passed two parts of the GED test.
    - 39 students have passed three parts of the GED test.

**Special Education (Kathrine Lander)**

Katherine Lander, Special Education Coordinator of Correctional Education (CE) at MD Labor’s Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning (DWDAL), reported on Special Education updates.

* Katherine Lander thanked the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) for their collaboration with DWDAL in hosting virtual Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings during the school closures in January and February.
* Since schools have reopened Katherine Lander has been able to visit facilities to meet with students and Special Education (SPED) teachers.
* A hand held academic device, called the Study Buddy, is being distributed to all schools to help the Literacy and Easy Level students advance in Math and English.
* The updated Special Education (SPED) Policy & Procedure Manual is in the final review and approval phase.
* A new Special Education (SPED) Integrated Education Program (IEP) Support Associate at Headquarters.
* An individual just accepted the Data Manager position at Headquarters.
* There are currently 3 Special Education (SPED) teacher positions available at Headquarters
* There is 1 Special Education (SPED) teacher position available at PT 1.

**Occupational Updates (Dr. Tamara Barron)**

Dr. Tamara Barron, Occupational Coordinator for CE at MD Labor’s DWDAL, reported on Career and Technology Education (CTE) updates.

* FY22 Updates:
  + Correctional Education’s CTE (Career and Technology Education) classes are back up and running following the latest COVID pause. They resumed on Monday, February 14, 2022, and continue to follow COVID safety protocols. We are very excited to continue to be up and running again!
  + As a part of the 3-year re-accreditation process, NCCER (The National Center for Construction Education and Research) is currently auditing Correctional Education’s Construction trades training programs. This process should conclude by the end of March.
* MSDE/Perkins Grant Updates:
  + Teachers continue to spend down their allocated FY22 Perkins Grant funds on needed instructional materials and tools & equipment.
  + The CTE Program continues to have representation at Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) trainings on data and equity in CTE training programs. During these trainings, federal legislation and mandates are discussed and annual MSDE requirements are reviewed. All of Labor HQ staff monitoring and supporting CTE Programs and CE’s PIN CTE teachers are MSDE certified and must follow MSDE guidelines regarding program implementation.
* National Certification Updates:
  + For FY 22, Correctional Education continues to work on updating training equipment and tools, enhancing training opportunities for both staff and students, and working towards strengthening on-the-job training experiences behind the fence.
  + Technology Updates:
    - MD Labor Correctional Education staff (Dr. Barron, Dr. DuBose, Danielle Cox, Jim Boden, and school principals) continue to work with the DPSCS IT Team to facilitate online testing for national certification. However, we are still unable to offer any testing at the moment, so CE & DPSCS numbers of national certifications earned are very low despite COVID.
    - The Labor and DPSCS Technology committee met on Friday, March 14, 2022 at 11am and the following updates were shared:
      * The Forcepoint application was procured by DPSCS, however, they are having challenges with the application.
      * While DPSCS IT works on the challenges, I will be attempting testing at OSTC on Friday, March 25, 2022. Dr. DuBose will also make another attempt to access the transition websites.
      * We are also scheduled to retry testing at ECIE March 30, 2022, through April 1, 2022.
      * DPSCS’ IT Team has also devised a schedule to begin planning for the wiring of the institutions that need testing pods to be created.
  + CTE teachers and Lead Teachers have finished registration and testing training for the construction trades online testing administration which is over half of CE’s training programs. They are ready to begin testing when the systems are up and running.
* Additional Updates:
  + The JSTP Program (on-the-job-training) continues to operate despite COVID limitations.
  + The joint Cemetery Restoration Project (P.R.I.N.C.E.) team has met several times since our last convening to discuss ways to convert the cemetery restoration project into a pilot training program for pre-release eligible incarcerated individuals.
    - To date, as a team we have developed a sample budget, a recruitment flyer, the MS22 for the Trainer, as well as a course outline to assist with further preparation.
    - Labor staff (Dr.Barron and Deborah Rappazzo, Executive Director, Office of Cemetery Oversight/Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing) are collaborating with Kimberly Stewart, DPSCS HQ – Programs, Treatment & ReEntry Services and Captain Evans (Work Release), to iron out the proposed details for the pilot training to take place at MCTC in Hagerstown, MD.
      * MCIJ has been identified as the second training site due to its space, mobility/status of the inmate population, and close proximity to a partner cemetery.

**Transitional Updates (Dr.Tamara Barron)**

* Dr. Erica DuBose, Transition Coordinator of CE at MD Labor’s DWDAL, reported on transition updates.
* Students and Certificates: All Correctional Education’s Transition classes are up and running under Covid-19 safety protocols. There is a current class average of between 5-10 students and as of January 31, 2022, 467 certificates have been earned for FY22. That’s up from 209 in October. We still made significant gains despite the Covid pause in late December and January.
* Technology: CE continues to work with DPSCS staff on technology needs and upgrades. Currently, the computers that are needed are not all up and running; however, CE is hopeful that DPSCS will continue to work towards a resolution to ensure that our returning citizens have access they need to vital sites such as the Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE) and 211.
* Vacancies: The transition department has filled one vacancy since the last quarterly meeting on December 13, 2021, in the central region. The candidate is currently going through the background check.
* Reentry Practitioner Symposium 2022: Dr. Erica Dubose is currently working with The Mayor’s Office of Employment Development and DPSCS’ Sandy Graham to have a virtual Reentry Practitioner Symposium using the VTI platform. Additionally, we are working with Adult Education to develop the mechanisms needed to roll this out successfully.
* Curriculum Updates: The CE Transition program made the edited Entrepreneurship Toolkit available to all teachers. The CE Transition program will be supporting students at CMCF as the program is piloted. The CE TRansition team is still waiting to receive the additional files needed from Enoch Pratt.
* MCE Cares Partnership: The CE Transition Program met with Ashley Lohr and her team to partner with MCE Cares to allow MCE workers to take parenting classes with our transition students. They will be integrated into upcoming classes to collaborate on parenting and relationship building for MCE workers at MCIW. The first group of students will begin in January.
* Curriculum Updates: The CE Transition Program is currently Updating the Intro to Computers and Keyboarding Syllabus and are in the final editing and proofing stages. The program plans to have it uploaded in the next few weeks. This will be the last update on this curriculum until classrooms are outfitted with the next Windows OS.
* CEC Meetings: Dr.Erica Dubose is always looking for innovative programs that can benefit the students in the CE transition program and encourages individuals to reach out if they know of an organization that works with returning citizens and would like to see them highlighted during one of the CEC meetings. Additionally, Dr.Dubose will be reaching out to people regarding the information needed to begin working on the next CEC Report.

**Regional Principal Updates**

Deputy Secretary McGLone opened the floor for regional principals to provide updates. The CEC features different principals each meeting to share updates from their facilities.

**Western Region (Deron Crawford)**

* During the COVID pause there was great collaboration amongst teachers in similar subject fields and proficiency levels. They worked together to make the COVID pause run much smoother and efficiently by sharing resources and methods of teaching skills.
* RCI’s library is now open full time along with offering full time classes for both occupational and academic classes.
* MCI-H is currently working with an A/B schedule which is challenging at times given the change in how passes are being distributed.
  + Teachers continue to provide Proxy work for students when they aren't physically in the classroom.
  + MCI-H is awaiting the start of a new Assistant Warden and Security Chief
* MCTC is back to full time class for all areas.
  + MCTC currently has 14 GEDs with several students being just 1 test away from graduating.
  + The IET program (Partnership with HCC) at the Hill is starting its second semester with an anticipated May completion.
* WCI/ NBCI reported that all is well and running smoothly.

**Central Region (Cynthia Blackwell)**

* All occupational programs at OSTC and academic classes at BCCC have resumed and the students and teachers are ecstatic to be back in the classrooms.
* Since February 14, 2 flagging certification classes have been held at OSTC and 1 flagging certification course has been held at DRCF.
* Navigator meetings have resumed at OSTC and they met with students on March 2.
* Navigator meetings have resumes at BCCC and they met with students on March 9.
* In January JCI staff read the book “Just Mercy” and it prompted them to consider their own biases concerning their professional and personal experiences and how they can be most empathetic and understanding towards the inmates they serve.
* The new TABE tester position has been filled at JCI and she is helping to remove individuals from the waiting list so classes are filling up.
* The new Special Education teacher at JCI should start some time next week.
* CMCF’s academic and transition classes are back to being fully operational.
* CMCF is planning to bring back the Flagger Force class in April.
* DRCF’s acemdic and transition classes are back to normal functionality.
* 10 inmates at DRCF completed the Flagger Force class on March 3.
* DRCF will begin a new Flagger Force class starting March 15.
* A new full time teacher started at Patuxent on March 8 and as a result enrollment has increased.
* MCIJ resumed as usual as of February 14.
* MCIW classes have fully resumed.
* MCIW is working with Pearson VUE to update their GED lab.
* MCIW peer recovery students are seeing clients in-person and are providing services while staff track their required 500 hours.
* MCIW reported that they are excited for their first Flagger group coming up in April.

**Eastern Region and Library Updates (June Brittingham)**

* Classes resumed at ECIE and ECIW on February 14, 2022 after a 7 week pause and are now running normally.
* The Special Education Teacher at ECI-E, Rita Miller retired on February 1st. The position was posted and closed on Friday, February 11 and Interviews should be held in the next week or so.
* There are vacancies for the following part time positions:
  + TABE tester
  + JSTP
  + ERW Instructor
  + ABE teacher at ECI Annex
* Since Jarah Hall left the Navigator position has yet to be filled and is causing some challenges.
* ECIE has had 1 GED completion since returning in February.
* COVID cases have declined significantly and many inmates are being vaccinated and boosted at the weekly clinic.
* CE Libraries are all up and running and providing library services.
* There is 1 vacancy at MCI-J’s library. Interviews were completed a few weeks ago and have a candidate identified.
* Maryland Humanities has announced that this year’s book for the One Maryland, One Book Program will be What is Mine is Yours by N. Coster. So far, 5 of our libraries have signed up to take part in the program and this will count as one of their required programs for the year.
* WCE Libraries have received several sets of legal books from the AG’s office.
* Hagerstown Libraries continue to test and use the new CIRC system that Jim Bowden created. Hopefully, as soon as the libraries are able to get networked, we will be able to install the new circulation system.

**Updates from DPSCS (Secretary Robert Green)**

Secretary Robert Green welcomed all attendees and thanked them for coming together for this meeting. Secretary Green took the time to acknowledge just how much progress has been made since March 14, 2019, exactly 2 year ago, when the government started to shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Secretary thanked everyone for all their hard work during the course of the past two years and congratulated everyone on everything that has been accomplished along the way and is looking forward to the future. Secretary Green shared that DPSCS is deploying a 1-1 to one tablet opportunity across the department starting at ECI that will provide tablets to incarcerated individuals and provide free content including information about opportunities for government assistance, further education or workforce. On another note DPSCS is working with MD think on a program called re-entry passport to develop a virtual realm that allows an individual access to all of their vital records and documents.

**Approval of Minutes**

A motion to approve the December 13, 2021, minutes was made and seconded. Jack Weber motioned to adopt it, and it was seconded by Secretary Robert Green. The minutes were approved at 11:07 a.m.

**Navigator Updates (Marshel Pollock-Lawrence, Ellen Bredt, and James Grossman)**

Reentry Navigators Marshel Pollock-Lawrence (Baltimore City, Harford County and Cecil County), James Grossman (Western Maryland)and Ellen Bredt (Anne Arundel) reported on updates and progress.

Marshall Pollock- Lawrence reported:

* She currently has 37 clients.
  + 20 clients are returning citizens the remaining 17 clients are individuals who have been released and are experiencing barriers to employment.due to their criminal background.
  + 15 of the 20 returning citizens have either a high school diploma or GED.
  + 5 returning citizens have signed up for Morgan State’s Entrepreneurship Program.
  + 3 returning citizens were hired by re-entry programs.
* Due to the large number of clients interested in expungement Ms.Lawrence is currently working with the Mayor’s Office of Employment Development to implement an expungement workshop in the career center.

James Grossman reported:

* Mr.Grossman started out by thanking Mr. Bill Gaertner for all of his help, partnership and hard work with getting returning citizens settled back into their communities.
* visited RCI last week and is planning on visiting MCI-H tomorrow, Tuesday March 15.
* Just started a new job class. Last week the students traveled to a job fair where at least 8 students received job offers.

Ellen Bredt reported:

* 33 more customers have been served at the local AJC since the last CEC meeting
* served 56 inmates
  + 8 were juveniles serving life sentences
* Began going back into the facilities a couple weeks ago. Just got scheduled in Dorsey run and MCI-J. Looking to schedule visits soon at JCI and MCIW.
* There will be a job fair in Annapolis on April 28th that is being co-hosted by Maryland DORS and LABOR and the Annapolis Mayor's Office.
* 2 returning citizens were hired with bonuses at the Regional Transportation Agency.
* Ellen introduced the new Reentry navigator for Southern Maryland, Henry Franklin.

**Employer Engagement Committee Updates (Jack Weber)**

Jack Weber, CEO at Uptown Press, reported on Employer Engagement Committee updates.

* There are still some internet connectivity and communication issues still existing in the Prisons. DPSCS is still working with contractors to get those issues fixed.
* There is a disconnect with work release. We need to coordinate a meet and greet with pre-release ABC, Jumpstart and Vehicles for Change.

**Concluding Remarks**

* Secretary Robert Green thanked everyone in attendance for a very successful Correctional Education Council meeting.
* Secretary Green adjourned the meeting at 11:33 a.m.

The next meeting of the CEC will be on June 13, 2022.