

**Department of Legislative Services**  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2026 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**First Reader**

House Bill 1340 (Delegates Amprey and Ruff)  
 Government, Labor, and Elections

**State Government - Prison Education Delivery Reform Commission - Establishment**

This bill establishes the Prison Education Delivery Reform Commission as an independent unit of State government to develop recommendations for the optimal delivery of education to individuals subject to the criminal and juvenile justice systems to increase public safety and reduce recidivism. The Governor’s Office of Crime Prevention and Policy (GOCPP) must provide staff for the commission. Commission members may not receive compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the standard State travel regulations. By January 1, 2027, and annually thereafter, the commission must submit a report of its activities, findings, and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2026.**

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** No effect in FY 2026 through FY 2028, under the assumptions discussed below. General fund expenditures increase by \$40,800 in FY 2029. Future year estimates reflect annualization, inflation, and ongoing costs. No effect on revenues.

(in dollars)	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	0	0	0	40,800	85,700
Net Effect	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$40,800)	(\$85,700)

*Note: ( ) = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease*

**Local Effect:** The bill does not materially affect local government operations or finances.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

## Analysis

**Bill Summary:** The commission must:

- convene an advisory stakeholder group that includes organizations with experience in (1) criminal justice policy reform; (2) advocating for individuals with learning disabilities and those from marginalized communities; (3) restorative justice; and (4) peer recovery and support services;
- work with the advisory stakeholder group, including conducting roundtable discussion forums seeking public input in all geographic regions of the State;
- develop an education-focused statewide framework of policies to invest in strategies to increase public safety and reduce recidivism of adult offenders, using a data-driven approach;
- research best practices for the primary, secondary, postsecondary, and career or vocational education of those who are subject to the criminal and juvenile justice systems;
- identify measures to mitigate risk factors that contribute to adult contact with the criminal justice system, with a focus on education;
- evaluate current workforce programs in which incarcerated individuals participate and the programs' effectiveness in training for employment opportunities that result in living wages; and
- request technical assistance from (1) the Abell Foundation; (2) the Annie E. Casey Foundation; (3) the Council of State Governments; (4) the Vera Institute of Justice; (5) the Coalition on Adult Basic Education; (6) the Rand Corporation; and (7) other similar organizations.

The bill establishes provisions regarding the membership of the commission and the terms of members.

### **Current Law:**

#### *Prison Education Delivery Reform Commission*

Chapters 945 and 946 of 2024 established – and Chapter 110 of 2025 extended – the [Prison Education Delivery Reform Commission](#), which is staffed by GOCPP. The commission must (1) convene an advisory stakeholder group, as specified; (2) work with the advisory stakeholder group, including conducting roundtable discussion forums seeking public input in all geographic regions of the State; (3) develop an education-focused statewide framework of policies to invest in strategies to increase public safety and reduce recidivism of adult offenders, using a data-driven approach; (4) research best practices for the primary, secondary, postsecondary, and career or vocational

education of those who are subject to the criminal and juvenile justice systems; (5) identify measures to mitigate risk factors that contribute to adult contact with the criminal justice system, with a focus on education; (6) evaluate current workforce programs and their effectiveness, as specified; and (7) request technical assistance from specified organizations. Members may not receive compensation.

In June 2025, the commission completed an [interim report](#) of its work so far. Under Chapter 110, the commission must submit an interim report of its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly by June 1, 2028, and a final report by January 1, 2029.

### *Correctional Education Council*

The Correctional Education Council is under the joint jurisdiction of the Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor) and the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services. The council must develop and recommend an educational and workforce training program for adult correctional institutions in the State. These programs must meet the special needs and circumstances of the inmates in each correctional institution.

The Correctional Education Council must also adopt regulations for a mandatory education program for inmates who fail to attain specified minimum educational standards as well as regulations for a mandatory workforce skills training program. Further, the council must advocate and promote the interests of educational programs and workforce skills training opportunities in correctional institutions and regularly review these programs to ensure that educational and training needs of inmates are being met.

### *Workforce Development and Adult Learning*

MD Labor's Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning (DWDAL) oversees Correctional Education throughout Maryland's State correctional facilities. DWDAL's Office of Correctional Education (OCE) provides career training opportunities "behind the fence." Offerings vary by institution but include training in automotive skills, barbering, construction, and welding. All occupational courses lead to a portable, industry-recognized credential that contributes to an incarcerated individual's employability after release. In addition to occupational programming, OCE oversees academic and transitional courses throughout Maryland's correctional facilities. Academic programming includes GED preparation ahead of earning a Maryland high school diploma and English as a second language courses. Prior to release, incarcerated individuals may complete transitional courses to ease their reentrance to society. These offerings include classes in parenting, employment readiness, financial literacy, and life skills.

MD Labor provides services to returning citizens through the Re-entry Navigator Initiative. Re-entry Navigators are a team of employment specialists located within the American Job Centers across the State who connect justice-involved job seekers with businesses by planning with prerelease individuals and supporting post-release job seekers. The navigators also continually establish a network of employer contacts who are interested in hiring their clients. More information on the Re-entry Navigator Initiative can be found on MD Labor’s [website](#).

*Education of Children by the Department of Juvenile Services*

Chapter 147 of 2021 transferred the Juvenile Services Education Program from the Maryland State Department of Education to the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) and established the Juvenile Services Education Board to oversee the program. Through the program, DJS oversees and provides comprehensive educational services to all juveniles placed in a DJS-operated detention and residential facility.

**State Expenditures:** As noted above, Chapters 945 and 946 established – and Chapter 110 extended – the existing Prison Education Delivery Reform Commission, which is staffed by GOCPP. The existing commission terminates June 30, 2029, whereas the commission established under the bill is permanent. This analysis assumes that the contractual position for the existing commission assumed in the fiscal and policy note for Chapter 110 (House Bill 877) is sufficient to staff both the existing commission and the new commission established by the bill until the contractual position terminates (assumed to occur on January 31, 2029, after the submission of the existing commission’s final report). Accordingly, general fund expenditures for GOCPP increase by \$40,750 in fiscal 2029, which reflects the cost of hiring one permanent program coordinator to continue providing support for the new commission beyond January 31, 2029. It includes a salary, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses.

Position	1.0
Salary and Fringe Benefits	\$32,530
Operating Expenses	<u>8,220</u>
<b>Total FY 2029 State Expenditures</b>	<b>\$40,750</b>

Future year expenditures reflect a full salary with annual increases and employee turnover as well as annual increases in ongoing operating expenses.

Any additional expense reimbursements for commission members are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources. It is also assumed that any State entities appointed to the commission can serve on the commission using existing budgeted resources.

**Additional Comments:** The Department of Legislative Services notes that the duties of the commission established by the bill are nearly identical to the duties of the existing commission.

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### **Additional Information**

**Recent Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See HB 209 and SB 623 of 2024 (enacted as Chapters 945 and 946).

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy; Office of the Attorney General; Office of the Public Defender; Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Higher Education Commission; Department of Budget and Management; Department of Juvenile Services; Maryland Department of Labor; Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services; Maryland Municipal League; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 3, 2026  
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