Purpose of Commission and Advisory Stakeholder Group

The major purpose of the legislation that created the Prison Education Delivery Reform Commission is to recommend a better model of delivery of prison education and job training services. The Advisory Stakeholder Group (ASG) therefore needs to keep this purpose in mind.

The Advisory Stakeholder Group will divide itself into three smaller workgroups. These workgroups include:

1. **ABE/GED/SPED**
2. **Higher Education**
3. **Career and Workforce Training**

These programs are tied closely to Transition Services so each student reenters society successfully.

From the available national research and current data, at least half of the Maryland prison population sorely lacks basic academic competency (reading, math, and digital skills) and marketable job skills that will allow them to earn a living wage. Ideally, that means that at least half of the prison population should be enrolled in an educational and career training program. For the average person, it takes at least a year or more of daily work to gain the requisite education and job skills to be successful after release.

With around 16,000 Maryland state prisoners the target is about 8,000 people. Data shows that probably around 10% of the population is enrolled in these programs on any given day. According to the 2023 Department of Labor's CEC annual report, 4,283 people had been enrolled in school in all programs. The report does not enumerate the average daily enrollment and attendance. Thousands of people do not participate in these programs during their incarceration.

We have a lot of work to do to study and recommend a better model of delivery to increase educational and job training resources to meet the needs of the prison population.

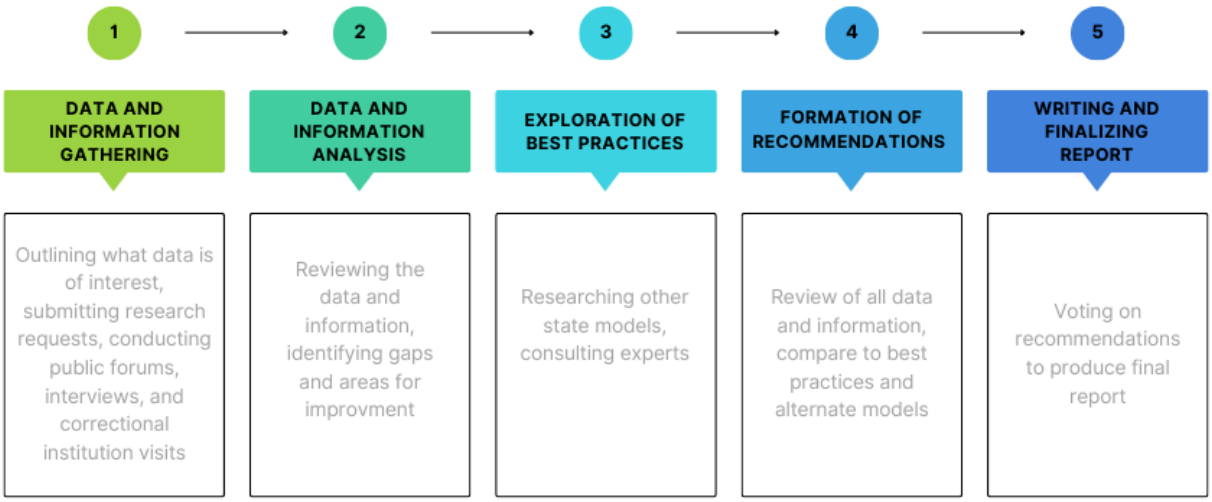
Guiding Questions and Process

As a starting point, each workgroup should keep the following questions in mind to guide its work.

1. **What are the data that DPSCS and DOL need to collect and publish? What data are currently being collected?**
2. **What data are needed to measure the size and quality of the programs and what improvements are necessary?**
3. **What kinds of data collection protocols and software tools are currently being used or planned?**
4. **Where are the deficits in the data collected and/or software tools that need to be addressed?**
5. **What are the major recommendations of the workgroup?**
6. **Are there systemic issues that impede the collection, distribution, use and evaluation of data?**
7. **Do state agencies coordinate and cooperate on crucial data?**
8. **What recommendations can be made toward a better model for the collection and use of data for program accountability and improvement?**

These questions will guide the formation of recommendations to improve prison education delivery. Recommendations will be sent to the Commission for discussion and final approval.

The following flow chart can be used to guide the work of the Stakeholder workgroups.



Workgroup Structure

Workgroups are responsible for reviewing system processes, data, best practices, and communicating their findings with the Commission and creating recommendations to improve correctional education. The goal of each workgroup is to improve the delivery model of their section of correctional education.

ABE, GED, and Special Education

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 and secondary education of those subject to those who are subject to the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

Evaluate current ABE, GED, and SPED programs in which incarcerated individuals participate and the programs' effectiveness in training for employment opportunities that result in living wages.

Identify measures to mitigate risk factors that contribute to adult contact with the criminal justice system, with a focus on education.

Post-Secondary Education

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 post-secondary education of those subject to those who are subject to the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

Evaluate current post-secondary education programs in which incarcerated individuals participate and the programs' effectiveness in training for employment opportunities that result in living wages.

Identify measures to mitigate risk factors that contribute to adult contact with the criminal justice system, with a focus on education.

Workforce and Vocational Training

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 career and vocational education of those subject to those who are subject to the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

Evaluate current workforce programs in which incarcerated individuals participate and the programs' effectiveness in training for employment opportunities that result in living wages.

Identify measures to mitigate risk factors that contribute to adult contact with the criminal justice system, with a focus on education.