

Vote on Tuesday, November 6 (or before)!

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## MARYLAND ALLIANCE FOR JUSTICE REFORM

Working to end unnecessary incarceration and build strong, safe communities



Be sure to vote on Tuesday, November 6 (or before)

Your vote is your voice as an American Citizen.

Let your voice be heard!

Pay close attention to Question 1 on the ballot. When Marylanders approved casino gaming, we thought the new revenue would increase education funding. But instead, nearly \$2 billion of that money has been redirected to other parts of the budget. Voting YES on Question 1 will stop this practice and keep a promise made to voters that casino revenue would increase school funding instead of being used for other purposes.



## Shutting Down the School-to-Prison Pipeline

The [Commission on the School to Prison Pipeline and Restorative Practices](#) met on October 15 2018 to review an initial draft of its report to the state legislature, which is to be completed by January 1, 2019. The Commission will make recommendations for establishing a Collaborative Action Plan to create a statewide framework for change in public school disciplinary practices, and defining what legislative and policy initiatives could be used to enact such a plan.

Recommendations will be made in the following areas: what the legislature can do; what the Maryland State Department of Education can do; what local districts can do; and what local schools can do.

The members decided that the report will contain a section on best practices rather than dictate what each school district or school should implement. This section will include definitions of climate and culture and a literature review of restorative practices including district-wide and school-level implementation. The report will also refer to model legislation and funding allocations in other states.

Members noted that the following substantive issues need to be included in the report:

- Implementation should not be focused solely on teachers and administrators. There are many personnel within the school who help set and maintain the school climate.
- Services from different funding streams that serve the same child should be braided together.
- Schools need to interface with juvenile justice system.
- Programs and schools need to integrate interventions (which address the underlying causes of behavior) and consequences (usually punishment).
- Students with special needs are expelled/suspended at higher rates than students without special needs. Thus, to make improvements all programs and policies must address the needs of students with special needs.
- Data on school performance and criminal justice system engagement should be linked.

The final public meetings of the Commission will be on November 19 and December 3. The report is due January 1, 2019. The Commission is set to sunset in June 2019.

*Thanks to Patricia Marks for this report!*

For more reports visit <https://ma4jr.org/school-to-prison/>

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## The Justice Reinvestment Advisory Board Meets: Inmate Population Down, Savings Still Unknown

The **Justice Reinvestment Advisory Board** was established in **Chapter 515** to provide advice to the Justice Reinvestment Act (JRA) Oversight Board. The Advisory Board is made up of stakeholders in the criminal justice system and is charged with analyzing the implementation of justice reinvestment initiatives.

A particularly Marvelous MAJR Monitor, Barbara Thomas, jumped in to attend the October 18 meeting of the advisory on two days' notice. Eleven stakeholders were in attendance representing organizations such as the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), CASA de Maryland, the Job Opportunities Task Force, and the American Civil Liberties Union (a complete list of members is on the Board's website). When a member asked for input on how the Advisory Board's recommendations are transmitted to the Oversight Board, the facilitator explained that an annual report is one

medium but ongoing recommendations and resources are another.

Members heard an update on JRA implementation. The inmate population is down about 6% (mostly due to reductions in those incarcerated before trial). The population is expected to decrease for 5 years and then level off.

### **Local Programs Vary Widely**

A review of local programming found disparities in access to key programs among counties. Jail addiction services is the most prevalent service provided across the state. Every county is required to have abuser intervention programs, and these programs would probably be open to partnerships with detention centers. Not all detention centers offer re-entry programs. A speaker observed that abuser intervention and anger management are very different and noted that sometimes women defending themselves from an abuser are charged as abusers.

### **Incarcerated Women Need Relevant Programs**



A woman whose role was to represent victims of sexual assault asserted that 85% of women in prison are there for prostitution or drugs. The prisons don't have programs that get to the root of their problems. She pleaded for ways to help them understand the triggers once back in community. She said 12-step programs need funding and have evolved to meet women's needs.

### **Maryland to Switch to NIBRS Soon**

The group heard an update on data collection standards, and it learned that the Uniform Crime Report will soon be replaced by the **National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS)**, which follows Federal guidelines. NIBRS will be able to collect information on race and ethnicity, which seems to be missing now.

### **How Much will Maryland Save? How will it Choose to Use the Money?**

The advisory board (like the rest of us at this point) does not yet know what savings have been identified as a result of the JRA and what percent of savings will be made available to fund local initiatives. When they know, the advisory board can and will make recommendations. Members stressed that its recommendations should be based on evidence about what works.



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### **MAJR General Meeting**

**Tuesday, November 27th from 6:00pm to 9:00pm**

Prince George's County Education Association



8008 Marlboro Pike, Forestville Maryland 20747

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MAJR is a nonpartisan association of over fifty community organizations and churches with members in every part of the state, formed to support justice reinvestment. Individual supporters include judges, attorneys, corrections professionals, as well as returning citizens, victims, and service providers.

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