



**JUVENILE JUSTICE MONITORING UNIT
STATE OF MARYLAND**

2020 FIRST QUARTER REPORT

The Maryland Juvenile Justice Monitoring Unit (JJMU)

The Juvenile Justice Monitoring Unit (JJMU) is an independent state agency housed in the Office of the Maryland Attorney General. The JJMU is responsible for reporting on Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) operated and licensed facilities across the state. Monitors from the unit conduct visits to these sites unannounced to guard against abuse and ensure youth receive appropriate treatment and services.

The mission of the JJMU is to promote the transformation of the juvenile justice system into one that meets the needs of Maryland's youth, families, and communities. This mission is accomplished by collaborating with all who are involved with the system.

The Unit has access to DJS incident and case notes databases and to DJS internal investigation and grievance documents. Monitors spend significant time gathering information and observing all aspects of operations. We sit in on activities and classes, interview youth, staff and administrators, and review video footage and original incident report documentation. The JJMU issues public reports covering each calendar quarter. These reports include data and analysis concerning treatment of and services provided to youth in detention and placement facilities throughout our state. Formal responses from DJS and the Maryland State Department of Education (which is responsible for education services in DJS facilities) are included within the reports.

The JJMU has been instrumental in driving positive changes in the Maryland juvenile justice system since its formation in the wake of widespread systemic abuse issues. The activities of the independent monitoring agency increase the transparency and accountability of the system and raise awareness of the needs of justice-involved Maryland youth.

The system in Maryland has improved significantly since the unit began monitoring and reporting and we will continue to push for the adoption of best practices as we evaluate current and emerging research and promising practices that serve to both enhance public safety and produce positive outcomes for young people in contact with the juvenile justice system.

JJMU First Quarter Report Compendium

The Maryland Juvenile Justice Monitoring Unit (JJMU) issues public reports covering each calendar quarter that include data and analysis concerning treatment of and services provided to youth in Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) directly run and licensed facilities throughout Maryland. Enclosed please find the unit's compilation of 2020 first quarter reports.

The Maryland Department of Juvenile Services' response and a response from the Maryland State Department of Education are all included, as indicated on the contents page.

The JJMU 2020 First Quarter Report was produced by Margi Joshi, Nick Moroney, Tim Snyder, and Marvin Stone. Thanks to Taran Henley, Fritz Schantz, and Maria Welker for technical assistance.

We respectfully submit this report to the Governor, the members of the Maryland General Assembly, the Secretary of the Department of Juvenile Services, and the members of the State Advisory Board for Juvenile Services as required under Maryland law.

Current and prior reports of the Maryland Juvenile Justice Monitoring Unit and related responses are available through our website at:

<http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/Pages/JJM/default.aspx>



NICK MORONEY
Director

STATE OF MARYLAND
JUVENILE JUSTICE MONITORING UNIT

May 2020

The Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., Governor
State of Maryland

The Honorable Bill Ferguson, President of the Senate
Maryland General Assembly

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones, Speaker of the House of Delegates
Maryland General Assembly

The Members of the Maryland General Assembly

The Honorable Sam J. Abed, Secretary
Department of Juvenile Services

The Members of the State Advisory Board for Juvenile Services
c/o The Maryland Department of Juvenile Services

Dear Governor Hogan, Senate President Ferguson, Speaker of the House Jones, Members of the General Assembly, Secretary Abed and State Advisory Board Members:

Enclosed is the Juvenile Justice Monitoring Unit's 2020 first quarter report which offers an update on conditions in Department of Juvenile Services' (DJS) operated and licensed facilities.

As detailed in the first section of this report, DJS has responded swiftly and diligently with enhanced hygiene protocols to protect the children under its care as well as the Department's staff in juvenile facilities from the potential health threat posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the best efforts of DJS however, the nature of institutionalization itself makes it especially difficult to prevent infection from spreading. Social distancing is almost impossible given the close quarters that youth and staff share.

Juvenile justice stakeholders should continue efforts to reduce the numbers of youth within our detention centers and placement sites given strong warnings from public health and juvenile justice experts and professionals about the dangers that conditions of confinement pose to youth and staff during this pandemic.

To prevent our juvenile justice institutions from becoming a hot spot of infections within the state, urgent action is needed by Maryland stakeholders to continue to drastically reduce the population of incarcerated youth and thereby mitigate the spread of the virus. This can be done judiciously by prioritizing the release of youth who pose little risk to public safety, including young people currently in secure detention or placement as a result of non-violent charges and offenses, youth incarcerated due to technical violations of probation, and youth nearing completion of their placement program. Youth with underlying health issues that may have a heightened adverse reaction to infection should also be released. A failure to take all appropriate preventative measures in a timely manner will put youth, staff, and community lives at risk.

Respectfully submitted,

Nick Moroney

Nick Moroney
Director
Maryland Juvenile Justice Monitoring Unit

Cc: Attorney General Brian Frosh
Chief Deputy Attorney General Elizabeth Harris
Deputy Attorney General Carolyn Quattrocki
State of Maryland Treasurer's Office
The Office of the Comptroller of Maryland
Deputy Secretary Wallis Norman, Mr. Karl Pothier and Mr. Jay Cleary, DJS
Margi Joshi, Tim Snyder and Marvin Stone, JJMU

JUVENILE JUSTICE MONITORING UNIT 2020 FIRST QUARTER REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COVID-19 RESPONSE AND THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM	1
INCIDENT AND POPULATION TRENDS	4
COMMITTED PLACEMENT	5
Victor Cullen (Hardware Secure)	6
Savage Mountain (Hardware Secure).....	8
Youth Centers x3 (Staff Secure)	10
Silver Oak Academy (Staff Secure)	13
J. DeWeese Carter Center (Hardware Secure)	16
DETENTION CENTERS	18
Baltimore City Juvenile Justice Center	19
Cheltenham Youth Detention Center	22
Charles H. Hickey, Jr., School	24
Thomas J.S. Waxter Children’s Center.....	26
Alfred D. Noyes Children’s Center	30
Lower Eastern Shore Children’s Center	32
Western Maryland Children’s Center	34
SMALLER FACILITY UPDATES	36
MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN DJS FACILITIES	38
DJS RESPONSE TO THIS REPORT.....	42
MSDE JSES RESPONSE TO THIS REPORT.....	63

COVID-19 RESPONSE AND THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

COVID-19 RESPONSE AND THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

DJS has responded swiftly and diligently with enhanced hygiene protocols to protect the children under its care as well as Department staff in juvenile facilities from the potential health threat posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Concerted efforts continue to be made to ensure youth and staff know about and practice prevention techniques to curb the spread of disease. Youth are encouraged to wash their hands several times a day and sanitization supplies such as bleach wipes and hand sanitizer are currently in adequate supply at most facilities for both youth and staff (for a recent exception, see BCJJC, page 19). Family visitation, unfortunately, had to be stopped and facility visitors have been limited to those essential vendors and other personnel necessary for basic operations. To keep incarcerated young people connected with loved ones, facility administrators are encouraging continued family contact by increasing the number of phone calls youth can have with their families and by setting up virtual meetings with parents through videoconferencing (when feasible) for those parents and guardians requesting such services.

Despite the best efforts of DJS however, the nature of institutionalization itself makes it especially difficult to prevent infection from spreading. Social distancing is almost impossible given the close quarters that youth and staff share.¹ While the flow of people in and out of these centers has been reduced, there is still a significant movement of essential facility staff in and out of sites and back and forth from surrounding communities. Youth and staff movement within and between facilities also provides innumerable points of contact for potential infection. The potential presence of infected but asymptomatic individuals compounds the danger for disease transmission and expansion. While protective gear such as surgical masks have been provided to youth and staff, the limited supply of PPE has resulted in disposable masks being worn for a week or more at time which weakens the ability to halt transmission. At time of writing, five youth and eleven staff have tested positive for the virus causing COVID-19.

Juvenile justice stakeholders should continue efforts to reduce the numbers of youth within Maryland detention centers and placement sites given strong warnings from public health experts and juvenile justice professionals about the dangers that conditions of confinement pose to youth and staff during this pandemic. Youth and staff safety will become harder to maintain over time as the spread of the coronavirus increases.

Aside from recreation time, youth are largely restricted to residential pods or units. Excessive downtime and boredom leads to heightened levels of anxiety amongst young people incarcerated in detention and placement facilities. A pronounced lack of meaningful programming due to restrictions and a decrease in activities further challenges youth and

¹ The youth centers, for example, have dorm style living arrangements instead of individual cells. In Grievance 16389, several youth reported that the numbers of people sharing the dorm space made it difficult to maintain social distancing.

hampers staff efforts to ease boredom and anxiety and provide ways for youth to stay positively engaged throughout the current crisis. Programming delivered by outside vendors who provided enrichment programming for youth through hands-on art and music courses has ceased and education services have been curtailed. At the beginning of the current public health crisis, the six-hour school day operated with teachers on site which kept youth occupied and afforded opportunities to help students to continue to make academic progress. However, during April of 2020, the Maryland State Department of Education (which provides education services at DJS institutions) moved to a severely truncated school schedule (approximately two-and-a-half hours in length) with learning packets and virtual learning replacing in-person teacher instruction.

Staffing shortages (which already existed within DJS institutions prior to the health crisis at the Noyes detention center and elsewhere) will be exacerbated if staff become sick from Covid-19 and this will further hamper the ability of facility administrators to maintain safety, stability and services for both youth and staff.

The majority of youth in the juvenile justice system have mental health and trauma-related issues, and measures put in place to protect the spread of infection can exacerbate existing mental health conditions. For example, entire units were on quarantine at Noyes and BCJJC detention centers due to the staff and youth infections during the latter part of the first quarter and the beginning of the second quarter. Youth on quarantine spent most of their time in their cells and had no access to school instruction through virtual learning. Some quarantined youth struggled with coping and experienced heightened feelings of fear, anxiety, and depression. Youth who tested positive were isolated and were battling with symptoms of illness while alone in their cell. Such conditions are virtually indistinguishable from solitary confinement and isolation has particular deleterious effects for youth with underlying medical conditions, trauma histories and those diagnosed as autistic.

To prevent our juvenile justice institutions from becoming a hot spot of infections within the state, Maryland stakeholders urgently need to continue to take action and reduce the population of incarcerated youth and thereby mitigate the spread of the virus. This can be done judiciously by prioritizing the release of youth who pose little risk to public safety, including young people currently in secure detention or placement as a result of non-violent charges and offenses, youth incarcerated due to technical violations of probation, and youth nearing completion of their placement program. Youth with underlying health issues that may have a heightened adverse reaction to infection should also be released. A failure to take all appropriate preventative measures in a timely manner will put youth, staff, and community lives at risk.

DJS Secure Detention Centers

Short-term, pre-disposition/pending placement

- Baltimore City Juvenile Justice Center (BCJJC)
- Cheltenham Youth Detention Center (CYDC)
- Charles H. Hickey, Jr., School (Hickey)
- Thomas J.S. Waxter Children's Center (Waxter)
- Alfred D. Noyes Children's Center (Noyes)
- Western Maryland Children's Center (WMCC)
- Lower Eastern Shore Children's Center (LESCC)

DJS Committed Placement Centers

Long-term, post-disposition

- Victor Cullen Center (Cullen)
- Savage Mountain (Savage)
- J. DeWeese Carter Center (Carter)
- Backbone Mountain, Green Ridge, Meadow Mountain youth centers (Three youth centers)
- Silver Oak Academy (SOA – DJS Licensed)

Incident and Population Trends

First quarter 2020 population and incident trends versus first quarter of 2019:

- ✓ Average daily population (ADP) of DJS youth decreased at BCJJC secure detention center and in three of the committed placement facilities (the three youth centers).
- ✓ Youth on youth fights and assaults decreased at WMCC detention center and in committed placement at three locations (the three youth centers). There were no youth on youth fights and assaults at the Carter facility during the quarter.
- ✓ Physical restraints decreased in secure detention at BCJJC and WMCC and in committed placement at Cullen, Savage and Carter.
- ✓ The use of mechanical restraints (handcuffs and/or leg irons) inside facilities decreased in secure detention at BCJJC, Waxter, and WMCC and in committed placement at Cullen and the three youth centers. Mechanical restraints were not used inside LESCC secure detention center or at the Carter committed placement center for girls.
- ✓ The use of seclusion decreased in secure detention at BCJJC, CYDC, Hickey, Waxter, and Noyes. Seclusion was not used at LESCC detention center.
- Average daily population (ADP) increased in secure detention at CYDC, Hickey, Waxter, Noyes, WMCC and LESCC and in committed placement at Carter.
- Youth on youth fights increased in committed placement at Savage, the three youth centers, and SOA and in increased in secure detention at BCJJC, CYDC, Hickey, Waxter, Noyes, and LESCC.
- Physical restraints increased in secure detention at CYDC, Hickey, Noyes, and LESCC and increased in committed placement at the three youth centers and SOA.
- Mechanical restraints usage inside facilities increased in secure detention at Noyes and increased in committed placement at the three youth centers.
- Seclusions increased in committed placement at Cullen.
- There were 66 incidents involving suicide ideation and 14 incidents of self-injurious behavior at DJS-operated facilities during the first quarter of 2020. Twenty-four of the 66 suicide ideations were recorded at Waxter, the detention center for girls.

COMMITTED PLACEMENT

Victor Cullen Center

The Victor Cullen Center (Cullen), in Frederick County, is a hardware secure (locked and fenced) committed placement center owned and operated by the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS/the Department). The DJS-rated housing capacity is 48 boys. African American youth represented 80% of total entries during the first quarter of 2020 compared to 72% in the first quarter of 2019. Hispanic/Latino youth represented 9% of youth entries during the current reporting period compared to 11% during the same time last year.

Victor Cullen – Selected Incident Categories	Q1 2018	Q1 2019	Q1 2020
Average Daily Population (ADP)	31	22	22
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	14	15	12
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	10	8	7
3. Physical Restraint	34	33	30
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	35	27	19
5. Seclusion	1	4	5
6. Contraband	4	1	6
7. Suicide Ideation	8	2	0
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	2	0	0

Population

The average daily population (ADP) at Victor Cullen in the first quarter of both 2019 and 2020 was 22) while the number of incidents involving youth fights and assaults, physical restraints of youth by staff, and use of mechanical restraints (handcuffs and/or leg irons) on

youth inside the facility decreased. There were five reported instances of seclusion during the first quarter of 2020 compared to four during the same time last year.

Lack of meaningful engagement and excessive downtime and boredom experienced by the young people held inside Cullen continue to be formidable barriers to establishing a functional treatment culture at the institution. The amount and caliber of therapeutic, vocational, recreational, and enrichment activities must be increased at Cullen. The current generic compliance-oriented points and levels system should be replaced with comprehensive supports and services geared toward providing youth with the tools, skills, and experiences that will assist them in attaining individualized treatment goals. Interventions should be evidence-based and provided within the framework of a trauma-informed and a trauma-responsive milieu.

The Maryland State Department of Education, Juvenile Services Education System (MSDE JSES) operates the school at Cullen and at all DJS-operated detention and placement centers. JSES employs a one-size-fits all approach to education services with high school instruction at all facilities consisting of four classes held for an hour and half each in core content areas. Students cannot earn a high school diploma within the JSES school system. The education curriculum is not supplemented with elective courses or long-term Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses leading to nationally recognized certifications in high demand fields. Employment and internship experiences do not exist.

At time of writing, JSES has begun to implement virtual learning to replace on-site instruction at all JSES schools in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

For information on education in DJS facilities, see the MSDE JSES section of this report which begins on page 38.

A modest World of Work (WOW) developed by DJS allowed high school graduates to complete odd jobs around the facility for minimum wage. Money earned was applied to restitution fees (if applicable) and any remaining funds were available for use upon release. The program was one of the few productive and meaningful outlets available to help youth pass their time. World of Work was discontinued by DJS headquarters staff. High school graduates are still asked to work by Cullen administrators for extra food instead of pay (Grievance 16208).

Savage Mountain

The Savage Mountain facility, located in Allegheny County, is a Department of Juvenile Services (DJS/the Department) owned and operated hardware secure (locked and fenced) committed placement center for boys with a DJS-rated capacity of 24. African American youth represented 100% of entries during the first quarter of 2020.

Savage Mountain	Q1 ² 2018	Q1 2019	Q1 2020
Average Daily Population (ADP)		7	7
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight		1	4
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault		0	1
3. Physical Restraint		12	11
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles		4	4
5. Seclusion		0	0
6. Contraband		1	0
7. Suicide Ideation		1	1
8. Suicide Attempt		0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior		0	0

Average daily population remained constant (at 7) for the first quarter of both 2019 and 2020. Comparing the same time periods, youth fights and assaults increased by 3 (from 1 to 4) and physical restraints of youth by staff decreased by 1 (from 12 to 11). There were four incidents involving the use of mechanical restraints (handcuffs and/or leg irons) on youth by staff at the

² Savage Mountain was closed for renovation to convert the physical plant from a staff secure (not locked and fenced) to a maximum security (locked and fenced) facility from September 2017 until December of 2018.

facility and one reported instance of suicide ideation during the first quarter of both 2019 and 2020.

Significant fiscal expenditures went to add fencing and other security apparatus to Savage Mountain to convert the facility from a staff secure to hardware secure facility. However, no additional resources were devoted to enhancing therapeutic and rehabilitative programming despite the fact that young people in the deepest end of the juvenile justice system have been found to suffer from extensive mental health, trauma-related, education, and family-related needs.

Constructive programming is limited and the structured activities provided such as music and art classes are offered intermittently on an ad hoc basis. Recreation space in the common area of the dormitory room where youth spend the bulk of their time on weekends and after school is prohibited because of ongoing construction.

The Maryland State Department of Education, Juvenile Services Education System (MSDE JSES) operates the school at Savage Mountain. There is strong interest among many students to effectively utilize the time they are incarcerated by learning trades that can position them to obtain employment upon release. However, long-term courses leading nationally recognized certifications in high demand fields are not available.

Youth consistently report boredom and restlessness due to the lack of comprehensive programming. In the absence of consistent and meaningful activities to keep youth engaged, the Department should provide Mp3 players (as is the practice at some DJS detention centers) and eBook readers, to help youth cope with the excessive downtime.

At time of writing, youth at Savage Mountain have been moved to a unit at the hardware secure Victor Cullen Center following the state public health emergency declared in response to the COVID-19 virus.

For information on education in DJS facilities, see the MSDE JSES section of this report which begins on page 38.

Youth Centers x3

The youth centers, located in remote western Maryland, consist of three separate staff secure (not fenced and locked) facilities for boys.³ Each of these centers is owned and operated by the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS/the Department). The facilities are: Green Ridge (40-bed capacity); Meadow Mountain (40 beds); and Backbone Mountain (48 beds). African American youth represented 66% of total youth center entries in the first quarter of 2020 compared to 71% in 2019. Latino/Hispanic youth represented 11% of youth entries in the first quarter of 2020, a decrease of 2% compared with the same period in 2019.

Combined Youth Centers (x3) – Selected Incident Categories	Q1⁴ 2018	Q1 2019	Q1 2020
Average Daily Population (ADP)	83	83	68
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	48	24	34
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	10	5	10
3. Physical Restraint	176	54	77
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	36	11	20
5. Seclusion	1	0	0
6. Contraband	9	3	17
7. Suicide Ideation	21	7	16
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	1	1	1

Average daily population at the youth centers declined by 18% in the first quarter of 2020 compared to the first quarter of 2019. However, youth on youth fights and assaults, physical restraints of youth by staff, and use of mechanical restraints (handcuffs and/or leg irons) inside

³ Savage Mountain was previously a staff secure facility that has been converted to a hardware secure (maximum security) facility. Savage Mountain was closed for renovation from September 2017 to mid-December 2018. For information on Savage Mountain, please see page 16 of this report.

⁴ Data from Q1 2018 and Q1 2019 were derived from the three staff secure youth centers: Green Ridge, Meadow Mountain, and Backbone Mountain.

the facilities increased by 42%, 43%, and 82% respectively. Reports of suicide ideation more than doubled when comparing the same two time periods.

All DJS committed placement facilities, including the three youth centers, lack a comprehensive evidence-based and trauma-informed treatment program that can effectively address the mental health, trauma, and grief issues that frequently underlie problematic youth behavior. Instead, the Department utilizes a generic, compliance-oriented points and levels system that creates power struggles between youth and staff. The Department should replace the current behavior modification system with individualized services designed to help foster personal success and growth based on each's youth strengths, interests, and needs. Interventions should be delivered within the framework of a supportive and therapeutic milieu.

To allow for a more individualized, supportive and therapeutic program, staffing ratios at the youth centers should be increased from adequate corrections system standards to a minimum of one staffer and a supervisor for every four youth. Increased staffing would facilitate greater rapport between direct-care workers and the young people in their care and, crucially, give staff the opportunity to attend to individual youth needs instead of continually having to defuse crisis situations. Additionally, more mental health clinicians should be placed at each youth center and at least one clinician should be on-site during waking hours to ensure ongoing therapeutic support.

Recreation and enrichment activities that could build social competencies, self-esteem and self-efficacy to help youth sent away from home are limited at the youth centers. Excessive amounts of downtime have been exacerbated by further restrictions to movement off-site and shortened school schedules due to the COVID-19 crisis. Each youth center should have a full-time recreational director to plan activities that youth can engage in on a regular basis. Administrators should provide personal music players (MP3 players) to youth to help them cope as is practice at some other DJS facilities. E-readers should also be available to every youth incarcerated youth.

The Maryland State Department of Education, Juvenile Services Education System (MSDE JSES) operates the school at all DJS-operated detention and placement centers. School instruction is limited to high school courses in four content areas delivered through four classes held for one-and-a-half hours each, although students cannot earn a high school diploma from a JSES school.

Many students, and particularly high school graduates, are interested in taking courses of study and gaining employment experience in fields which will help them secure a livable wage through professional work in the community. However, long-term vocational courses leading to nationally recognized certification in high demand sectors are not offered by MSDE JSES. Furthermore, DJS and MSDE have yet to work together to effectuate opportunities for the youth in their care to work or intern in the communities surrounding DJS facilities.

At time of writing, JSES has begun to implement virtual learning and distribution of education-related “packets” to replace on-site and in-person instruction at all JSES schools in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

For information on education in DJS facilities, see the MSDE JSES section of this report which begins on page 38.

A modest job experience initiative called World of Work (WOW) was developed and instituted a few years ago by DJS to enable high school graduates to complete odd jobs around facilities in return for minimum wage. Money earned was applied to restitution fees (if applicable) and any remaining funds were available for use by the young person upon release. The program was one of the few productive and meaningful outlets available to help youth who already possessed a high school diploma to pass their time. World of Work was discontinued by DJS headquarters in 2019.

Silver Oak Academy

Silver Oak Academy (SOA), located in Carroll County, is a privately-operated staff secure (not locked and fenced) committed placement center licensed by the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS/the Department) to house up to 96 boys. African American youth committed to SOA through DJS represented 89% of entries during the first quarter of 2020 compared to 84% during the same period in 2019.

SOA – Selected Incident Categories	Q1 2018	Q1 2019	Q1 2020
Average Daily Population (ADP)	33	42⁵	41
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	23	15	22
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	1	7	5
3. Physical Restraint	17	17	24
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	0	0	0
5. Seclusion	0	0	0
6. Contraband	7	7	6
7. Suicide Ideation	1	0	0
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	0	0	1

The average daily population of youth placed at Silver Oak decreased by 1 (from 42 to 41) in the first quarter of 2020 when compared to the first quarter of 2019. Comparing the same

⁵ During the third quarter of 2018, SOA began accepting youth from jurisdictions outside of Maryland. The ADP listed for the first quarter of 2019 and first quarter of 2020 was provided by SOA and includes youth at the facility that were committed through both DJS and out-of-state agencies.

time periods, youth fights and assaults increased by 47% and physical restraints of youth by staff increased by 41%.

Lapses of supervision, lack of structure and unprofessional behavior by overnight staff in particular continues to be a concern as the following incidents demonstrate.

In 162897, which occurred shortly before 11 pm, a staffer (staffer A) started yelling at a youth and confronting him face-to-face for not turning out his lights in his room. The youth retreated inside his room and staffer A continued to yell at him from outside the room door. While this power struggle was taking place, other youth exited their rooms and were walking around the communal part of the dormitory (the "dayroom"). Another staffer who was seated nearby did not intervene to de-escalate the situation between the agitated staffer and the youth or try to do crowd control with the other youth who were awake and walking around the dayroom.

Staffer A left the unit and returned with several other staff. One of the staffers who returned with Staffer A to the unit, Staffer B, turned on all the lights on the floor and insisted on having a meeting with the youth to discuss the importance of following directives. While trying to effectuate his aim, Staffer B yelled as he summoned and corralled youth (many of whom had been sleeping up to this point) out of their rooms. One youth, while standing near his room door, voiced frustration about being woken up by Staffer B. In response, Staffer A confronted the youth by walking up to him and yelling in his face. Staffer A and B then entered the youth's room and attempted to physically restrain him. Staffer A left the youth's room. Staffer B continued to restrain the youth and attempted to escort him out of his room and off the unit to process with him. The youth managed to break free from Staffer B, ran up to Staffer A and punched him. Staffer A fought back and had to be pulled off the youth by several other youth and staff.

In Incident 162886, a youth reported to staff several times that another youth was threatening to assault him and so he didn't feel safe. Daytime staff made sure that the two youths stayed separated. According to the youth who felt unsafe, the threatening youth stated to him "wait until the day staff are gone and night shift comes on. Then I'll get you". The threatening youth did subsequently enter the other youth's room and assaulted him leaving a bruise on the youth's face while night staff were inattentive or otherwise occupied.

Incident 162464, three youth who shared a room together got into a fight while night time staff was distracted with medication distribution. By the time staff finally noticed the kids were fighting and responded, one of the kids had a bloody nose and there were visible bloody injuries on the other two youth.

Refresher training on basic security protocols such as proper staff positioning/posting and prompt de-escalation in situations that can lead to aggression can also help reduce the number of aggressive incidents and need for physical restraints as the following incidents illustrate.

In an incident 162310 one youth became irate at another youth and threw the other youth's chess pieces to the ground and then stormed off toward the bathroom. The staffer who was present did not intervene in this interaction. The seated youth then got up from his chess game and followed the first youth into the bathroom and the two of them began fighting. The staffer did intervene to break up the fight. After the altercation, the youth who threw the chess pieces was taken out of the area and counseled. When he returned to the unit, he walked with purpose to the bathroom and started fighting the other youth again.

In Incident 162359, two youth entered the bathroom intent on fighting. They were both restrained and removed from the bathroom and staff began processing the situation with both youth. Other staff present did not remain posted at the bathroom and the bathroom area was left unsupervised. Shortly after the first fight, two additional youth entered the bathroom and began fighting.

Major strengths of the program at Silver Oak, including the opportunity for youth to work and volunteer in the community, regularly attend community events, and participate in competitive athletics, have had to be suspended because of COVID-19 restrictions. During the first quarter, educators at Silver Oak continued to provide on-site instruction. Vocational programs in culinary arts, construction, and barbering were also provided during the first quarter. Unlike DJS placement sites, students at Silver Oak are able to earn their high school diploma onsite and many students are on-track to complete diploma requirements by June of 2020.

Visitation has been banned due to the current COVID-19 crisis and Silver Oak has not increased the number or duration of phone calls beyond two 15-minute calls per week. Several youth requested more opportunities to check in with loved ones. Administrators should prioritize arrangements for increased family contact. Comprehensive access to video conferencing with parents in lieu of suspended in-person visitation should be provided to all youth.

J. DeWeese Carter Center

The J. DeWeese Carter Center (Carter), located on the eastern shore, is a maximum security committed placement center for girls. Carter is owned and operated by the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS/the Department) and has a DJS-rated housing capacity of 14 girls. African American youth represented 75% of total youth entries to Carter during the first quarter of 2020, compared to 58% during the same period in 2019. Hispanic/Latina youth represented 17% of total youth entries in the first quarter of 2020.

Carter – Selected Incident Categories	Q1 2018	Q1 2019	Q1 2020
Average Daily Population (ADP)	6	7	9
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	0	0	0
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	0	3	1
3. Physical Restraint	5	7	2
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	1	2	0
5. Seclusion	1	2	0
6. Contraband	0	0	0
7. Suicide Ideation	1	1	1
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	2	0	2

The average daily population of youth at Carter during the first quarter of 2020 increased by two - from seven to nine – in comparison to the first quarter of 2019. There were no youth on youth fights or assaults at Carter during either the first quarter of 2019 or 2020. There were two instances where staff physically restrained youth and one report of suicide ideation during the

current reporting period. Mechanical restraints (handcuffs and/or leg irons) and seclusion were not used at Carter during the quarter.

The overarching program at Carter is identical to the compliance-oriented behavioral management system used in DJS detention centers and in the DJS placements centers where boys are incarcerated. Gender-responsive and trauma-informed care and training geared toward the specific needs of girls have not been developed. Administrators have done little to foster community involvement and girls rarely leave the locked institution for volunteer or enrichment activities. Programs provided by outside vendors, such as music classes, are offered sporadically. The result is that, with the exception of some individualized therapy provided by facility therapists, Carter functions more as a high security jail or holding facility than a treatment center. The environment is particularly oppressive for girls who have received their high school diploma as there is little for them to do and no effective effort has ever been made by either DJS or MSDE to place them in jobs or internships or to offer substantial training or to create long-term career and technical education (CTE) programs leading to recognized certification. The result is a routine that fails to keep incarcerated high school graduates constructively engaged during the time they are held at Carter.

After a month of behavioral program compliance, girls are sometimes taken off grounds to a local recreation center for physical activity. Much like other programming at Carter, this outing has not been consistently offered or carried through. Furthermore, the recreation director at Carter has not responded to youth requests for more of a variety in recreational and fitness activities and fails to take the initiative in developing fun and interactive programming. Additionally, the recreation director is often not available to lead any recreation activity at all because of being diverted by requests to help with tasks unrelated to recreation by facility leadership.

Carter lacks a working kitchen or food preparation area. Meals have to be brought in by an outside vendor. The quality of the food given to the incarcerated girls is low and the size of the meal portions provided to the young people for breakfast and lunch are small. The food, although supposed to be a hot meal, frequently served cold.

Food delivery services were suspended by the vendor toward the end of the first quarter of 2020, as the vendor refused to provide food to the girls at Carter during the Covid-19 outbreak. Because of this refusal and an inability to find another source of food provision, DJS moved the young people from Carter in Chestertown to a living unit at the Lower Eastern Shore Detention Center (LESCC) in Salisbury.

For more information on education services in DJS facilities, see the MSDE JSES section which begins on page 38.

DETENTION CENTERS

Baltimore City Juvenile Justice Center

The Baltimore City Juvenile Justice Center (BCJJC) is a maximum security detention center for boys. The Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS/the Department) owns and operates BCJJC, which has a DJS-rated housing capacity of 120 youth. African American youth represented 91% of total youth entries during the first quarter of 2020, compared to 96% during the same time period in 2019.

BCJJC – Selected Incident Categories	Q1 2018	Q1 2019	Q1 2020
Average Daily Population (ADP)	98	88	76
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	91	57	88
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	11	9	2
3. Physical Restraint	100	100	95
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	24	22	14
5. Seclusion	4	12	9
6. Contraband	6	9	10
7. Suicide Ideation	4	8	3
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	0	0	2

Average daily population (ADP) at BCJJC during the first quarter of 2020 decreased by approximately 14% when compared to the same time last year while youth on youth fights and assaults increased by 54%. To further compare the same two periods, instances of physical restraints of youth by staff decreased by 5%, the use of mechanical restraints (handcuffs and/or shackles) on youth inside the detention facility decreased by 36% and the number of times seclusion was used decreased by 25%.

There is a lack of consistency and structure at BCJJC which contributes to an unstable milieu. Facility administrators do not take an active or visible role on the units as reported by youth and staff. Youth incentives for good behavior are offered but often not delivered. For example, youth on one unit were offered a pizza party at the end of every week the group displayed positive behavior. However, administrators failed to follow through in a timely manner on providing youth with their earned incentives. Dietary staff at BCJJC have not consistently provided extra portions during daily dinner meals (which has been approved by Department administrators) and facility administrators have failed to ensure youth requests for extra portions during dinner are addressed each day to help manage hunger levels.

The facility superintendent resigned during the first quarter of 2020 which has exacerbated the lack of stability. The next superintendent of BCJJC should be a strong leader who can model professionalism and consistency who is actively engaged in and supports daily operations in order to improve living and working conditions for youth and staff.

A number of youth and staff at BCJJC tested positive for the COVID-19 virus. In response, all units where infected youth and infected staffers had been in were placed on quarantine.

Youth who tested positive were placed in medical isolation which, unfortunately, bore a close resemblance to seclusion or solitary confinement with the exception that cell doors were not locked (in some cases, the doors were initially locked).

All youth on medical quarantine were required to stay in their cells the majority of day for a two week period. A majority of youth in the juvenile justice system have had exposure to trauma and up to 70% meet the criteria for a mental health disorder.⁶ Prolonged isolation can exacerbate trauma and mental health related conditions. Juvenile justice stakeholders should continue to work together to reduce the population of youth housed at BCJJC.

Social distancing to prevent the spread of the virus causing COVID-19 is inherently difficult to maintain in a confined environment. Youth reported being unable to practice social distancing at all times while detained. Frequent hand washing is also important in the prevention of COVID-19. Soap distribution was interrupted and some youth were not given soap to wash their hands for a period of time before supplies could be replenished. As youth began reporting these conditions to attorneys and advocates, administrators required that youth sign statements stating that they were able to maintain social distance and wash their hands when needed. Some youth refused and were informed by staff that they must sign forms. Many youth felt coerced into signing them.

An Intensive Services Unit (ISU) at BCJJC houses youth allegedly involved in incidents of aggression. While the unit was intended to provide targeted individualized interventions for youth with aggression issues, the unit is perceived by youth and functions as a punitive separation measure in practice. Youth eat and attend school on the unit and are only allowed off the unit once per day to go to recreation. Intensive treatment to address behavioral aggression and underlying trauma issues is not provided. Apart from an introductory psychoeducational

⁶ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3714673/>

group on trauma and its effects that is provided to all DJS workers, direct-care staff on the ISU do not receive specialized training on interacting therapeutically with youth on the unit.

Youth with mental health issues are inappropriately sent to ISU for behavior that, while not threatening, is difficult for staff lacking specialized skills to address or even manage. During the quarter, a youth who urinated on the floor and licked unit walls was placed on ISU for this behavior.

Structured activities to keep youth engaged should be increased with help from community organizations. Baltimore Youth Works actively works with boys at BCJJC to link youth to jobs upon release. Another well-attended program, the Boys Club, provided mentoring services on a consistent basis. The program was discontinued by the Department and it or a similar program should be reinstated.

The current prohibition on outside visitors has curtailed the already limited options for meaningful programming for youth. Administrators should collaborate with mental health, case management, and direct-care staffers to develop ways to keep the young people incarcerated at BCJJC productively active.

The Maryland State Department of Education, Juvenile Services Education System (MSDE JSES) operates the school at BCJJC. At time of writing, JSES has begun to implement plans for virtual learning and for distribution of education-related “packets” to replace on-site instruction at BCJJC and at all JSES schools inside DJS’ facilities in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

Long term vocational/career and technical-related education (CTE) certification is not offered at DJS detention or placement facilities. There are some short term CTE courses offered in construction site flagger certification, ServSafe basic food handling hygiene, and CPR. These courses are only offered on an intermittent basis. A youth who requested to enroll in flagger certification while detained at BCJJC was unable to do so because the course was not offered during his stay. CTE options should be expanded – skill certification and job training are especially important for those incarcerated students who have already earned a high school diploma.

For more information on education in DJS facilities, see the MSDE JSES section of this report which begins on page 38.

Cheltenham Youth Detention Center

Cheltenham Youth Detention Center (CYDC), located in Prince George’s County, is a hardware secure (locked and fenced) detention center owned and operated by the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS/the Department). The DJS-rated housing capacity is 72 boys. African American youth represented 75% of total youth entries in the first quarter of 2020 versus 69% during the same period in 2019. Hispanic/Latino youth represented 13% of entries during the first quarter of 2020 compared with 9% of total entries in the same period last year.

CYDC– Selected Incident Categories	Q1 2018	Q1 2019	Q1 2020
Average Daily Population (ADP)	50	55	57
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	49	36	53
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	2	0	2
3. Physical Restraint	57	34	76
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	2	2	2
5. Seclusion	9	5	2
6. Contraband	0	1	3
7. Suicide Ideation	5	1	4
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	2	2	5

Average daily population in the first quarter of 2020 increased by 4% when compared to the first quarter of 2019 while youth fights and assaults increased by 47% and physical restraints of youth by staff more than doubled. There were two incidents involving the use of mechanical restraints (handcuffs and/or leg irons) on youth inside the facility and two instances of seclusion during the first quarter.

The uptick in incidents indicates a need for more intensive staff training on maintaining structure, safety, and security with emphasis on the following areas:

The importance of supervisor appraisal of incidents: Several incident audits were missing supervisory comments or contained short one to two word assessments (such as “restraint was bad” or “ok job”) (Incidents 163042/162962, 162887, 162911). Supervisor audits and detailed critique of incidents can serve as a valuable training and accountability tool. Constructive feedback can improve staff performance and aid in helping staff prevent and appropriately address challenging youth behavior.

The importance of awareness of group dynamics and responding appropriately to verbal conflict among youth: Divisive conversations among young people can escalate to physical altercations (Incident 163132). Staff should be taught appropriate interventions to de-escalate or re-direct verbal conversations that can lead to potential incidents

The importance of maintaining safety during transition periods: Heightened staff vigilance and proper staff positioning is especially important during transition periods and initiation of line movement because these situations are when incidents are prone to occur (Incident 162894).

The availability of varied recreational and enrichment activities also help create a safer environment for youth and staff. Consistent structured programming can ease boredom and reduce feelings of anxiety and restlessness which, if ignored or disregarded, can cause non-compliance or escalate into acting out. Given current restrictions on outside programming, a shortened school schedule and a block on visitation due to the COVID-19 crisis, , staff members, case managers, and mental health clinicians should be supported (through material and administrative assistance) in their efforts to create programs and activities to help keep youth productively engaged.

The Maryland State Department of Education, Juvenile Services Education System (MSDE JSES) operates the school at CYDC.

At time of writing, JSES has begun planning to implement virtual learning and distribution of education-related “packets” to replace on-site and in-person instruction at all JSES schools inside DJS detention and placement facilities in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

For information on education in DJS facilities, see the MSDE JSES section of this report which begins on page 38.

Charles H. Hickey, Jr., School

The Charles H. Hickey, Jr., School (Hickey) in Baltimore County is a maximum security detention center for boys. Hickey is owned and operated by the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS/the Department) and has a DJS-rated housing capacity of 72 beds. African American youth accounted for 79% of entries in the first quarter of 2020, compared to 81% during the first quarter of 2019.

Hickey – Selected Incident Categories	Q1 2018	Q1 2019	Q1 2020
Average Daily Population (ADP)	59	49	50
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	39	38	59
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	1	3	5
3. Physical Restraint	44	55	64
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	3	7	7
5. Seclusion	5	13	8
6. Contraband	5	8	5
7. Suicide Ideation	5	8	7
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	0	0	1

Average daily population (ADP) in the first quarter of 2020 increased by one (from 49 to 50) compared to the first quarter of 2019. Comparing the same time periods, youth fights or assaults increased by 55% and physical restraints of youth by staff increased by 16%. Use of seclusion decreased by 38% while the number of instances involving use of mechanical restraints (handcuffs/ leg irons) on youth within the facility remained constant at seven. There were seven reports of suicidal ideation during the first quarter of 2020.

There were high levels of overtime at Hickey due to staff call-outs and the number of staff on leave. Excessive overtime can lead to staff burnout and inadequate staffing levels can compromise facility operations and security.

In Incident 162089, a youth with high anxiety was pacing around a classroom. The youth tried to leave the classroom and a staffer inside the classroom physically pulled him away from the door and back in the classroom. When the youth resisted, the staffer picked the youth up and slammed him to the ground. The staffer is no longer employed at the facility.

A transgender girl placed at Hickey during the quarter reported severe adjustment issues in detention and disparate treatment as a result of her SOGIE.⁷ Experts, including mental health clinicians with specialized training in the unique experiences and needs of LGBT youth, need to be available every DJS detention and placement facility to provide consulting services to facility staff and direct-care services to LGBT young people housed in.

The Maryland State Department of Education, Juvenile Services Education System (MSDE JSES), operates the schools at Hickey. A vacancy for a science teacher was being filled by a long term substitute while a vacancy for a special education teacher remained unfilled during the first quarter of 2020.

Options for high school graduates are limited at Hickey. A modest World of Work (WOW) developed by DJS allowed high school graduates to complete odd jobs around the facility for minimum wage. World of Work was discontinued by administrators at DJS headquarters. To pass time, high graduates, many of whom are youth with adult charges who typically spend many months or even a year in detention, often have to sit in on high school classes to pass the time.

For information on education in DJS facilities, see the MSDE JSES section of this report which begins on page 38.

⁷ SOGIE stands for sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. See http://www.nclrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/AECF_LGBTinJJS_FINAL2.pdf

Thomas J.S. Waxter Children’s Center

The Thomas J.S. Waxter Children’s Center (Waxter) in Anne Arundel County is a hardware secure (locked and fenced) detention center for girls. Waxter is operated by the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS/the Department) with a DJS-rated housing capacity of 42 beds. African American girls represented 66% of entries in both the first quarters of 2020 and 2019. Hispanic/Latina youth represented 12% of youth during the first quarter of 2020 compared to 10% during the first quarter of 2019.

Waxter – Selected Incident Categories	Q1 2018	Q1 2019	Q1 2020
Average Daily Population (ADP)	21	24	28
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	14	13	16
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	2	12	6
3. Physical Restraint	35	37	37
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	0	5	2
5. Seclusion	1	5	3
6. Contraband	1	2	0
7. Suicide Ideation	33	21	24
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	4	0	0

The average daily population (ADP) at Waxter increased by 17% in the first quarter of 2020 compared to the first quarter of 2019 while youth fights and assaults increased by three (from 13 to 16) and physical restraints of youth by staff stayed constant (at 37). There were three

instances of seclusion and two incidents involving the use of handcuffs and/or leg irons inside the facility during the quarter.

Unlike the larger DJS detention facilities housing boys, Waxter lacks an infirmary despite the fact that juvenile justice experts have noted justice-involved in particular “have under-attended physical health needs”⁸ and that incarcerated girls report “significant health needs related to illness, vision, dental, and hearing.”⁹ Waxter housed several pregnant girls during the first quarter of 2020. While pre-natal care is provided weekly by midwives from the University of Maryland, nurses onsite do not receive specialized training in working with detained girls, many of whom present with histories of sexual abuse and mental health and trauma-related disorders. Girls often report that medical staff are insensitive or inattentive to their needs. One pregnant youth reported during the quarter that a nurse at Waxter tried to dissuade her from getting an abortion and encouraged her to take vitamins because “it would help her baby.” The youth described feeling uncomfortable discussing her decision to terminate her pregnancy with medical staff and was upset with how the nurse approached the issue.

Other issues with medical services at Waxter include a lack of timely response to medical issues. For example, a girl requested Tylenol for menstrual pain on the morning of a monitoring visit and was not seen until dinner time of the same day. She suffered from painful cramps throughout the day. Another girl became agitated when she had a toothache and was not allowed to expeditiously access pain medicine (Grievance 16367). Simple requests such as those for over-the-counter pain medicine to address headaches or other aches should be attended to promptly.

The physical plant at Waxter, including living units, is in a deplorable state and should be completely renovated. Some issues reported during the quarter (many of which have been recurring for years) include:

- Clogged toilets in the bathroom and no doors on some shower stalls (Grievance 16242). The girls reporting feeling uneasy having to shower without doors and about the lack of privacy. The lack of privacy is even more disturbing given the high numbers of girls in the juvenile justice system who have experienced sexual trauma. Showers were left without doors for weeks before they were fixed.
- Rodent and insect infestations with several girls reporting bites on their arms and legs as a result

⁸ Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Policy Guidance on Girls in the Juvenile Justice System, p. 3, available at: <https://rights4girls.org/wp-content/uploads/r4g/2016/08/OJJDP-Policy-Guidance-on-Girls.pdf>

⁹ Ibid.

- Temperature fluctuation due to an outdated heating and cooling system leading to uncomfortably hot and cold temperatures (often simultaneously in different sections throughout the building)

The population at Waxter should be kept at a minimum given the dilapidated physical plant and the limited number of individual cells. In response to the COVID-19 crisis, one unit has been designated a quarantine unit for new admissions and, as a result, some youth on the other units were required to sleep in an infrequently used dorm room where they reported uncomfortably hot or uncomfortably cold conditions with little air flow.

The Maryland State Department of Education, Juvenile Services Education System (MSDE JSES) provides educational services at the school at Waxter. However, the Department of Juvenile Services is responsible for the school physical plant.

The school building has serious structural and functional deficits and should be replaced. Issues include:

- cracks in the foundation, posing a security risk for youth and staff as the ceiling could collapse at any time
- rotting floors leading to uneven walking surfaces which also poses a threat to safety. One teacher has already tripped and fallen due to uneven floor boards and missed work after sustaining multiple rib fractures
- minimal classroom storage space
- sewage smell around the school due to drainage issues
- rodent infestations (mice) and stink bugs which fall from the ceiling and onto the heads and clothing of youth and staff
- leaking windows and ceilings when it rains
- inconsistent Wi-Fi access

Rather than replacing the rotting trailers - which are decades old - managers at DJS headquarters recently approved a renewal of the lease on the dilapidated school trailers for another five year term.

A long-term vacancy for a math teacher led to disruption in math instruction for students (Grievance 16267). In addition to a need to offer competitive salaries to help recruit and hire education staff in a timely manner, increased resources should be devoted to special education services. In Grievance 16267, a youth requested extra help in school and requested to be evaluated for a learning disability. She has not received an evaluation to date.

Teachers in JSES schools should receive specialized training in working with the juvenile justice population. As detailed in Grievance 161189, a teacher used profanity toward students repeatedly. Research shows that “strong and supportive relationships between students and teachers lead to improved motivation and enduring social-emotional and academic outcomes.

This connection is particularly important for first generation students and students of color.”¹⁰ All teachers should be encouraged to develop a positive learning environment - rather than utilizing an adversarial and confrontational approach - to foster academic progress.

At time of writing, JSES has begun to implement plans for virtual learning and the distribution of education-related “packets” to replace on-site instruction at all DJS detention and placement facilities in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

For more information on education in DJS facilities, see the MSDE JSES section of this report which begins on page 38.

¹⁰ Santelises, Sonja, “We will not hold low-income students back a grade because of coronavirus”, COMMENTARY, Baltimore Sun, May 11, 2020, available at: <https://www.baltimoresun.com/opinion/op-ed/bs-ed-op-0512-sonja-santelesis-coronavirus-20200511-a526qjulvfhxpb32x4pfucjn6m-story.html> [citing Pianta, Robert; Hamre, Bridget; & Stuhlman, Megan (April 2003), “Relationships Between Teachers and Children”, available at: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/0471264385.wei0710>]

Alfred D. Noyes Children’s Center

The Alfred D. Noyes Children’s Center, located in Montgomery County, is a Department of Juvenile Services (DJS/the Department) owned and operated maximum security detention center for boys and girls with a DJS-rated capacity of 57 youths. African American youth represented 60% of entries in the first quarter of 2020 compared to 70% during the same period in 2019. Hispanic/Latinx youth accounted for 27% of entries in 2020 compared to 22% in 2019.

Noyes – Selected Incident Categories	Q1 2018	Q1 2019	Q1 2020
Average Daily Population (ADP)	33	31	32
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	29	9	26
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	5	2	1
3. Physical Restraint	55	27	48
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	8	2	6
5. Seclusion	3	2	1
6. Contraband	3	0	2
7. Suicide Ideation	9	1	9
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	0	0	1

Average daily population increased slightly (from 31 to 32) during the first quarter of 2020 compared to the same time period last year. At the same time, youth on youth fights and assaults, use of physical and mechanical restraints (handcuffs and/or leg irons) within the facility, and instances of suicide ideation all increased substantially. There was one instance when seclusion was used during the quarter.

To prevent and mitigate incidents, staffing ratios at Noyes should be increased to allow for a minimum of two staffers per unit to help improve supervision of youth movement, promote an expeditious response to crisis situations, and enhance utilization of de-escalation techniques (Incident 162846, 162701, 162446). Additional staff can also ensure that youth services are not disrupted. For example, during a monitoring visit in the first quarter, youth entitled to special education services were unable to attend OGE (outside general education) classes while education testing was occurring because there was not enough staff to supervise both testing and OGE classrooms.

There are ongoing vacancies for upper and mid-level managers which further compounds staffing issues. The Department should prioritize the hiring of supervisory (and direct-care) staff at Noyes.

Education Services

The Maryland State Department of Education, Juvenile Services Education System (MSDE JSES) operates the school at Noyes.

Long-term substitutes are utilized in the school to make up for teacher vacancies. All education personnel, including substitutes, should receive ongoing support and specialized training on working with youth in the juvenile justice system. In Incident 162446, a long-term substitute teacher began verbally arguing with a youth. He then approached the youth and grabbed him by the shirt and began tussling with him. Staff pulled the teacher apart from the youth while the teacher resisted. The substitute no longer works in the school at Noyes.

There was an ongoing vacancy for a career research and development (CRD) teacher and special education teacher throughout the first quarter of 2020. In order to begin to address the longstanding issues with the hiring and retention of education personnel at Noyes (and at all other DJS-operated facilities), teachers and support staff must receive similar salaries and benefits - including school holiday schedules - as those offered by public school districts in the surrounding areas.

Administrators at JSES failed to pay tuition fees to community college in time for students to enroll in classes in the beginning of 2020. As a result, high school graduates at Noyes who were eligible (and eager) to take college courses were instead required to sit in on high school courses to pass their time during the day.

Through a partnership with Montgomery County Public Schools, a new trailer was provided to expand school space at the school at Noyes. JSES should partner with school districts in other localities to improve conditions and resources for students detained or committed in DJS facilities (see, for example, the section describing the severe physical plant shortcomings at the school in the Waxter facility on page 26 of this report). For more information on education in DJS facilities, see the MSDE JSES section of this report which begins on page 38.

Lower Eastern Shore Children’s Center

The Lower Eastern Shore Children’s Center (LESCC) is a hardware secure detention center located in Salisbury. LESCC is owned and operated by the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS/the Department) and has a DJS-rated housing capacity of 18 boys and six girls. African American youth represented 69% of entries during the first quarter of 2020 compared with 78% during the first quarter of 2019.

LESCC – Selected Incident Categories	Q1 2018	Q1 2019	Q1 2020
Average Daily Population (ADP)	18	16	18
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	4	4	6
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	3	0	0
3. Physical Restraint	35	14	35
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	0	0	0
5. Seclusion	0	0	0
6. Contraband	0	1	2
7. Suicide Ideation	7	5	1
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	2	0	1

The average daily population at LESCC increased by 13% in the first quarter of 2020 when compared to the first quarter of 2019 while youth on youth assaults and fights remained low (at six). However, physical restraints of youth by staff more than doubled when comparing the same time periods. Mechanical restraints (handcuffs and/or leg irons) and seclusion were not used at LESCC during the quarter.

LESCC employs a collaborative and child-centered approach to ensure that youth are provided attentive and compassionate care. A youth advisory board which consists of detained young people and representatives from the facility's administrative, direct-care, mental health, medical, and case management divisions meet twice a week to discuss ways to improve programming for youth. As a result of youth input, MP3 players have been provided to help the incarcerated young people cope with the stressors of institutionalization; structured activities have also increased and recreation activities have become more varied.

An assistant superintendent position should be re-instituted at LESCC to help the superintendent with administrative and other tasks.

The Maryland State Department of Education, Juvenile Services Education System (MSDE JSES) is responsible for education services in DJS facilities.

For information on education in DJS facilities, see the MSDE JSES section of this report which begins on page 38.

Western Maryland Children's Center

Western Maryland Children's Center (WMCC), located in Washington County, is a 24-bed maximum security detention center for boys owned and operated by the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS/the Department). African American youth represented 52% of total entries during the first quarter of 2020 compared to 57% in the first quarter of 2019. Latino/Hispanic youth accounted for 12% of total entries during the same time period, an increase of 3% compared to the first quarter of 2019.

WMCC – Selected Incident Categories	Q1 2018	Q1 2019	Q1 2020
Average Daily Population (ADP)	21	17	20
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	14	13	8
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	0	0	1
3. Physical Restraint	32	33	14
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	4	9	5
5. Seclusion	1	2	0
6. Contraband	0	2	0
7. Suicide Ideation	6	4	0
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	0	0	0

The average daily population increased by 18% in the first quarter of 2020 compared to the same time last year while the number of incidents involving youth fights and assaults, the use of physical restraints on youth and the use of mechanical restraints (handcuffs and/or leg irons) on youth within the facility decreased substantially. There were no reported instances of suicide ideation or seclusion during the quarter. While there were no incidents of reported

seclusion, WMCC does occasionally engage in a practice of placing agitated and mechanically-restrained youth who are involved in incidents in an observation room which is monitored by staff on a continuous basis (Incident 162863). This practice is not recorded as seclusion in the DJS incident database.¹¹

A long-standing vacancy for a recreation director remained open throughout the first quarter of 2020.

The Maryland State Department of Education, Juvenile Services Education System (MSDE JSES) is responsible for education services in DJS facilities, including at WMCC. Teachers in JSES schools should receive specialized training in working with the juvenile justice population. Several youth at WMCC reported to the monitor and in grievances that a classroom teacher consistently cultivated an antagonistic and adversarial relationship with youth rather than a productive and supportive one (Grievances 16185, 16211, 16320). Rapport between the teacher and her students has not improved despite counseling from the school principal. As a result, students reported feeling disengaged academically while in that teacher's class. Research shows that "strong and supportive relationships between students and teachers lead to improved motivation and enduring social-emotional and academic outcomes. This connection is particularly important for first generation students and students of color."¹² Teachers should be encouraged to develop a positive learning environment to foster academic progress.

For more information on education in DJS facilities, see the MSDE JSES section of this report which begins on page 38.

¹¹ The Department's policy defines seclusion as placing a youth in a locked room. Seclusion can only be used as a last resort in situations where a youth poses an imminent risk of harm to himself or others, or is attempting to escape and cannot be used as punishment. Youth who no longer meet the criteria to be placed on seclusion are to be released. The DJS policy further requires particular practices around documenting the use of seclusion and monitoring youth who are being secluded. Md. Dept. of Juvenile Services Policy and Procedure on Seclusion RF-720-18.

¹² Santelises, Sonja, "We will not hold low-income students back a grade because of coronavirus", COMMENTARY, Baltimore Sun, May 11, 2020, available at: <https://www.baltimoresun.com/opinion/op-ed/bs-ed-op-0512-sonja-santelesis-coronavirus-20200511-a526qjulvfhxpb32x4pfucjn6m-story.html> [citing Pianta, Robert; Hamre, Bridget; & Stuhlman, Megan (April 2003), "Relationships Between Teachers and Children", available at: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/0471264385.wei0710>]

SMALLER FACILITY UPDATES

SMALLER FACILITY UPDATES

Morning Star Youth Academy

Morning Star Youth Academy is a staff secure (not locked or fenced) committed placement center located in Dorchester County on the eastern shore. The program is operated by Vision Quest, Inc., and it is licensed by the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services to house up to 24 boys. Morning Star utilizes the trauma-informed Sanctuary¹³ model. Programming also includes access to equine-assisted therapy on-site. Individual and group therapy sessions are provided through a contract with a local private vendor.

Teachers at Morning Star are considered facility employees and on-site instruction continues and has not been disrupted due to recent events involving the COVID-19 crisis.

Administrators at Morning Star began to leverage community resources to bring in additional programming options, including vocational training, during the first quarter of 2020. These efforts should continue once restrictions due to the current public health emergency have eased.

Morning Star should establish a youth advisory board to provide the young people under their care a voice in daily programming. Several youth indicated an interest in life skills including learning about budgeting and finance and studying for the test to receive their driver's learner's permit.

One Love Group Home

One Love Group Home (One Love) is an 8-bed group home in Baltimore City operated by Building Communities Today for Tomorrow, Inc. The home is licensed by and receives referrals from the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services. One Love provides youth between the ages of 17 and 20 with individualized care in a community-based, home-like environment and functions as an alternative to secure detention.

Youth are enrolled in local schools to complete high school graduation requirements and can work in the surrounding area. Community resources are harnessed to provide life skills education, substance abuse services, and specialized vocational training programs aligned with student interest. Group and individual therapy is provided by a contracted vendor.

One Love can serve as a model for community-based alternatives to incarceration.

¹³ For more information on the Sanctuary model, see: <http://www.sanctuaryweb.com/>

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN DJS FACILITIES

THE MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN DJS FACILITIES

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has operational control of the schools inside DJS detention and placement facilities

MSDE JSES lacks the technical expertise, structural framework, organizational culture, and budgetary resources to operate a functional school system.¹⁴ The decision to move to all students to virtual learning rather than on-site instruction in response to the COVID-19 crisis has created added problems negatively effecting access to a quality educational experience. Services consist of some virtual learning sessions and a distribution of packets of worksheets that students complete on residential units with the aid of DJS direct-care staff. Several issues have arisen from the move to virtual learning, some of which are highlighted below.

Accountability and Transparency: JSES has not set up regular meeting times so that advocates, attorneys, parents, and other juvenile justice stakeholders can get updates and information about the education program at DJS facilities. Parents have not been informed about changes to the education services for their children or about how special education plans will be effectuated in this new learning environment.

Collaboration: JSES is relying on DJS staff to effectuate delivery of education services in facilities. Tasks delegated to DJS include:

- Setting up and running the technology required to enable a virtual learning environment and troubleshooting issues that occur
- Distributing and picking up packets of work
- Helping students complete packet work on residential units
- Ensuring that all students, even those have been placed in quarantine due to concerns about potential spread of infection, receive access to virtual instruction and school work

The increased reliance on DJS for education-related services will require closer collaboration between JSES and DJS administrators and workers on the ground. For example, while Chromebooks were dropped off by JSES for student use at DJS facilities, there was no communication from JSES to DJS staff about how to configure them for student use or about JSES's plan as to how to incorporate their use into the school schedule. Increased communication and coordination can help better ensure that resources are being fully utilized.

¹⁴ See JJMU 2019 Annual Report, p. 52, available at:
https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/JJM%20Documents/19_Annual_Report.pdf

Disruption of Services: Youth experience of spotty virtual learning to date differs widely from JSES reports of comprehensive service delivery. Issues that students are experiencing include the following:

- On days when virtual lessons are not provided, JSES is requiring students to complete 6 hours of packet work on their own. The expectation that students, some of whom need comprehensive educational supports, sit and complete 6 hours of school work on their own is unrealistic. Time would be better utilized by providing students with additional therapeutic and enrichment programming that is interactive and relational in nature. JSES should collaborate with DJS to replace some of the hours reserved for packet completion with meaningful activities.
- Student packets and virtual lessons do not correspond to their grade level and there are numerous reports of packets and virtual lessons being out of sync.
- Some students found the packet of work given to them too difficult and didn't have anyone to help them complete the work, leaving them frustrated. Special education students are particularly struggling without the availability of additional supports and services.
- Packets have not been graded and returned to students and thus students do not know if they are completing the work correctly or if they have made progress.
- Roll out of virtual learning platforms was delayed due to issues with technology. Youth reported that they could see and hear the teacher but that the teacher could not hear them which made interaction between the teacher and students difficult. Technological problems are ongoing at some schools.
- Staffing shortages at some facilities, such as Cheltenham Youth Detention Center, prevented students from moving to the school to access virtual learning.

Administrators at JSES should undertake closer monitoring of on-the-ground operations to ensure aspirational plans about comprehensive education services are brought to fruition and that the real-life experience of individual students matches expectations set forth by JSES administration.

In the long-term, the state of Maryland should consider shifting responsibility of educational services for incarcerated youth to an organization or model that is better resourced to provide high quality instruction to students in the deep end of the juvenile justice system.

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE SERVICES – RESPONSE



DJS RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

For a detailed description of the response by the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis and its efforts to protect the safety and well-being of youth, staff and the community at-large, please see the DJS Response to the JJMU's 4th Quarter Report and 2019 Annual Review, which can be found on pages 59-64.

[https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/JJM%20Documents/19 Annual Report.pdf](https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/JJM%20Documents/19%20Annual%20Report.pdf)

For additional information, please see the COVID-19 Response page on the DJS website, <https://djs.maryland.gov/Pages/COVID-19.aspx> or call the agency's COVID-19 24-hour hotline at 877-357-4161.

DJS appreciates JJMU's acknowledgement of DJS's efforts to protect youth and staff during this pandemic. In March 2020, the department began making significant changes to facility procedures in anticipation of the arrival of the Coronavirus to Maryland. Steps such as implementing social distancing and universal masking, increased hygiene and sanitation, limiting facility entry to staff and approved vendors, creating intake admission units in juvenile detention facilities, and creating medical isolation units for youth who test positive for Coronavirus have played a role in minimizing the impact of the pandemic on DJS facilities. To date, 7 youth in DJS custody have tested positive for Coronavirus, with all 7 having fully recovered. Nineteen DJS staff have tested positive with 15 having currently recovered from the virus.

While DJS has restricted the number of individuals accessing DJS facilities to staff and approved vendors, the Department recognizes the potential risk that those individuals could be exposed while in their home communities. For that reason, DJS has implemented a pre-entry screening procedure consisting of a questionnaire and a temperature check. As of March 2020, every staff person or vendor seeking to enter a DJS facility must complete and sign a symptom questionnaire and submit to a temperature scan before entering. Any staff or vendor who indicates possible COVID-19 symptoms on the questionnaire and/or has a temperature over 100 degrees Fahrenheit is denied entry. Additionally, DJS's medical director and other medical staff are available in the event that any questions or concerns arise about admitting staff

to DJS facilities. Through this rigorous process, DJS seeks to ensure that staff who are potentially sick are identified before possible exposure of youth or staff inside the facility.

The use of medical isolation for individuals testing positive for COVID-19 (or any other highly contagious virus) is a medical best practice and similar to what occurs in the community, whether in the home or in a hospital or other setting. Under normal circumstances, DJS policy restricts the use of “time out” periods for a youth to be away from the larger population in his/her room as a means of “cooling off.” DJS recognizes that being in a room isolated from others is difficult for anyone. To alleviate the stress of the handful of youth that have tested positive for COVID-19 and required to be medically isolated, DJS has provided handheld games and cell phones for youth to call family while they recover. Additionally, all youth in medical isolation and youth housed on quarantined units are assessed by a licensed medical professional daily and at frequent intervals as ordered by our medical director and team of physician and nurse practitioner staff. Given the highly infectious nature of COVID-19, our healthcare staff agreed that medical isolation is necessary to protect youth and staff in DJS facilities.

As part of its infection mitigation measures, DJS provides Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to all staff and youth in DJS facilities. DJS continues to procure PPE in sufficient quantities to ensure that all youth and staff in DJS facilities can be properly masked at all times.

As mentioned above, DJS has restricted access to its facilities to just staff and approved vendors (i.e. food delivery, repair and service professionals, etc.). Consequently, multiple outside organizations who provided programming to youth are no longer permitted to enter DJS facilities in order to reduce the potential exposure of DJS youth and staff to COVID-19. To address these gaps, DJS administrators have supplied all DJS facilities with activities and games for youth such including, but not limited to, MP3 players and handheld games. DJS will continue to closely follow the State re-opening plan as set forth by Governor Larry Hogan to determine an appropriate time to permit organizations to access DJS facilities and provide safe, socially distanced programming to youth.

**DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE SERVICES
RESPONSE TO JJMU 2020 FIRST QUARTER REPORT**

The Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) has reviewed the Juvenile Justice Monitoring Unit's (JJMU) 2020 First Quarter Report, and provides the following response:

THE JJMU SHOULD ADOPT STANDARDIZED AND OBJECTIVE AUDIT TOOLS.

The Department continues to urge the JJMU to adopt nationally-recognized standards and audit tools to ensure objective and credible evaluations of Department facilities. JJMU staff should also be certified to audit all state and federal regulatory requirements (Md. Code Ann., State Government §6-404). By doing so, the Department would be provided clear, factual, measurable, and objective recommendations. Using objective standards would assist the JJMU in reducing any biased or subjective recommendations and provide a consistent framework for its evaluations.

Objective standards would also reduce the JJMU's need to rely on unverified youth statements as the sole basis for some of the findings. While youth statements may provide some insight, they must also be viewed in context. Surrounding circumstances and viewpoints from other youth, staff and administrators are necessary to paint a complete picture.

The Department has its own auditing tools and practices to ensure that staff and administrators are adhering to the Department's policies. Within the Department's Office of the Inspector General, there are several units that oversee and monitor the agency's operations. Specifically, the offices of Quality Assurance, Investigations, Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), and Youth Advocacy report to the Inspector General who, in turn, reports to the Secretary. All of the aforementioned offices have standardized procedures and tools to ensure that the results of their efforts are objective and measurable.

COMPARING CURRENT FACILITY INCIDENT DATA TO PREVIOUS YEARS IS OF LIMITED UTILITY.

DJS's facility population is regularly turning over. For example, the average length of stay for a youth in a DJS detention facility is approximately 20 days and the average length of stay in DJS residential treatment is approximately 125 days.¹⁵

It is helpful to be aware of the relatively rapid turnover in DJS facilities when reviewing JJMU's "Selected Incident" charts at the beginning of each facility section. Due to the ever-changing populations at DJS facilities, comparing a facility data point from a previous year to a current DJS facility data point is of limited utility. In addition to the turnover in DJS facilities, other factors like changes in Maryland law,

¹⁵ See Department of Juvenile Services Data Resource Guide Fiscal Year 2019 pp.109 and 145
https://djs.maryland.gov/Documents/DRG/Data_Resource_Guide_FY2019_.pdf

DJS policy, police practices, and/or court practices can have a noticeable effect on the population of youth in DJS facilities.

For those reasons, DJS continues to encourage the JJMU to compare data to previous quarters within the same year rather than their current approach referencing data from 1 to 3 years prior. Examining a previous quarter or an average of 2 or 3 immediate previous quarters would allow for a more accurate comparison and be far more useful in determining facility trends.

A REVIEW OF DJS'S TREATMENT MODALITIES WILL BE PART OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC MISSION TO RECOMMEND REFORMS TO MARYLAND'S JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM.

During the 2019 session of the Maryland General Assembly, the legislature passed and Governor Hogan signed Senate Bill 856 / House Bill 606 into law, which established the Juvenile Justice Reform Council (JJRC). The JJRC is comprised of a diverse group of juvenile justice stakeholders and experts. Members include legislators, experts on juvenile law and policy, and representatives of law enforcement, the judiciary, advocacy organizations, child serving agencies, and formerly system-involved youth.

The legislature charged JJRC with:

- using a data-driven approach to develop a statewide framework of policies to invest in strategies to increase public safety and reduce recidivism of youth offenders;
- researching best practices for the treatment of juveniles who are subject to the criminal and juvenile justice systems; and
- identifying and making recommendations to limit or otherwise mitigate risk factors that contribute to juvenile contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

A technical assistance provider will assist the JJRC in conducting a rigorous review of the system, including the treatment modalities used by DJS in its committed programs.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the JJRC's work is suspended until further notice. However, at the appropriate time, DJS looks forward to engaging with all of the stakeholders on the JJRC to develop an evidence-based treatment model that achieves the goals set forth above.

COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY IS THE FOUNDATION OF DJS'S THERAPEUTIC TREATMENT MODEL AND SUPPORTS DJS'S BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM.

As stated above, the JJRC will undertake a review and make recommendations for reforms of Maryland's juvenile justice system, including DJS's committed treatment modalities. DJS looks forward to engaging

with all of the stakeholders on the JJRC to develop an evidence-based treatment model that achieves those goals.

For a detailed description of DJS's current treatment modalities based on cognitive behavioral therapy and trauma informed care in its facilities, please see the Introduction Section of DJS's Response to the JJMU's 2019 First Quarter Report.

Committed Placement Centers

Victor Cullen Center (VCC)

DJS recognizes the importance of activities to keep youth busy and reduce the amount of downtime youth experience. Victor Cullen offers on-campus programming for all youth including Yoga, Youth for Christ, Pet Talk, art, game room, movie night, music program, Beyond the Natural Foundation, recreation in the gym, as well as activities and tournaments on the units. Programming at VCC has been impacted by restrictions imposed by the Department in response to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. For more details about DJS's efforts to address programming in DJS facilities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, please see the Introduction section of this Response.

Regarding Grievance 16208, graduate youth earn additional reinforcers for performing tasks in the facility such as additional phone calls, items from the commissary and additional time in the game room.

Savage Mountain

Youth at Savage Mountain Youth Center receive extensive mental health treatment, as well as trauma-related and family-related services. The facility has two behavioral health clinicians and a small population, where youth receive a combination of individual and group counseling, as well as family counseling. All facility staff are trained in Trauma Informed Care, and youth with trauma symptoms receive Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), which is an evidence-based trauma intervention. All youth participate in Trauma Addictions Mental Health and Recovery – Youth (TAMAR-Y) groups, which provide them with skills to address stress and trauma.

As noted in the JJMU report, the facility dayroom is not being used for recreational activities until all construction is complete. This decision was made to ensure the safety of all youth. The facility established recreation outside of that immediate area and a large incentive room, gym, and outside space are available for use. Televisions and gaming equipment will be added to the dayroom once current projects are completed.

Savage Mountain has implemented the following programs and activities: Redemption Youth Development Program, consistent and ongoing family engagement services, Dream Loud Music

Program, ongoing CHAMPS participation with on- and off-ground collaborations with other DJS facilities, pottery class, and chess club with MSDE participation and collaboration. Savage also offers a revamped and enhanced incentive room with ping pong tables, arts and craft activities, leisure time activities, physical skills challenge classes with a trainer, a wood shop program, a bi-weekly basketball clinic training program, and regularly scheduled guest lecturers. Outdoor recreation activities occur daily, weather permitting, and include Reflection off-ground participation at other facilities. There is also recreation in the gym. Behavioral health staff sponsor group activities and events. The facility has also provided MP3 players to youth as an incentive and/or leisure time activity.

A Recreational Specialist was hired on 11/20/19 to implement and oversee physical education of youth.

On March 14, 2020, Savage Mountain youth were moved to VCC as part of the agency's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Youth Centers

The Youth Centers are treatment focused facilities that utilize the individualized treatment plans developed for every youth. Each youth has an individualized treatment plan and each youth receives individual and group therapy weekly. Treatment includes trauma groups, substance abuse groups, and anger management groups, in addition to individual therapy.

All staff are trained in trauma informed care, and licensed behavioral health clinicians are trained in Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT). TF-CBT is an evidence-based cognitive-behavioral treatment for youth with trauma symptoms. DJS's behavior modification program rewards positive youth behavior, which helps to create a safe environment where youth can receive therapy, education, and other services that promote their development. The behavior modification program therefore complements treatment.

Each facility's interdisciplinary treatment team collaborates with youth to establish treatment goals, and interdisciplinary treatment team meetings occur weekly to assess youth's progress. With certain youth, individualized behavior contracts and/or guarded care plans are developed and implemented to further assist youth with more specialized resources and supports that help them accomplish their goals.

All staff are trained in trauma informed care, which helps them understand how trauma impacts youth and their behavior, and it provides them with strategies for working more effectively with youth. Trauma Informed Care is supported by trauma specific individual and group interventions. Youth with significant trauma symptoms receive Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), which is an evidence-based trauma treatment.

All youth also participate in TAMAR-Y (Trauma Addictions Mental Health and Recovery -Youth) trauma groups. TAMAR-Y includes psychoeducation as well as mindfulness techniques that help youth better

manage trauma symptoms. Youth also participate in START (Social Skills Training and Aggression Replacement Techniques) groups, which are based on ART (Aggression Replacement Training), an evidence-based aggression management group.

The agency staffing ratio is one staff to eight youth during waking hours and one staff to sixteen youth during sleeping hours. These ratios are national best practices for juvenile facilities, and are required to be in compliance with the ACA and PREA.

Additionally, DJS has hired four new clinicians in the past nine months and the Department continues to actively recruit clinicians for positions. At least one clinician is onsite Monday through Friday at each center. Clinicians are otherwise on-call and respond to the facilities as needed.

The Youth Centers offer many recreation and enrichment activities which allow youth the opportunity to build social competencies, self-esteem, and self-efficacy. The CHAMPS program provides opportunities for youth to compete in sporting events, art and poetry competitions, and oratorical contests.

The Youth Centers provide structured activities both on- and off-grounds such as arts and crafts, campus wide physical education events, educational activities, service learning opportunities, and both individual and group activities focused on youth's therapeutic treatment needs. Current structured activity programs are limited to on-campus events which take into account the need to social distance as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. For more details about DJS's efforts to address programming in DJS facilities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, please see the Introduction section of this Response.

The Youth Centers have developed a no-contact large muscle exercise schedule to permit appropriate social distancing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The activities are designed to ensure the safety of both youth and staff while keeping youth engaged in many outdoor activities such as: Frisbee golf, croquet soccer, aerobic exercise, and campfire treatment.

Currently, the Youth Centers are utilizing personal handheld devices which include individually assigned MP3 players, video games, board games and Nook e-readers.

In order to better align DJS's resources with the needs of its youth, the Meadow Mountain Youth Center will be closing effective June 30, 2020. Youth will be placed among the other youth centers. Meadow Mountain staff will be placed at other DJS facilities.

[J. DeWeese Carter Center](#)

Carter has a therapeutic culture where all staff are trained in trauma informed care and where youth receive individualized treatment to address their mental health and substance abuse issues. Youth

participate in a combination of individual and group therapy weekly. Carter's behavioral health staff are trained in Trauma-Focused Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy.

Carter youth attend activities in the community. This year, in collaboration with Washington College and Sassafras Environment Eastern Shore Land Conservancy Educational Center, the girls had the opportunity to participate in community service projects including planting a garden and picking fresh vegetables for the community. Employment opportunities will continue to be explored.

Youth placed at Carter receive at least one hour per week of individual psychotherapy, at least one hour of family therapy at least biweekly, and daily psychoeducation or therapeutic process groups. Youth have access to behavioral health clinicians and other support staff as needed for crisis and supportive needs, attend school daily, and participate in recreational activities.

The facility's recreation program offers diverse opportunities geared towards gender specific activities and youth have direct input in the recreational activities offered. Youth have a choice between an indoor recreation room equipped with a treadmill, bike, elliptical, or weight balls for personal work outs. Youth can also choose to use the game systems like the Play Station 4 or Xbox to play Just Dance, Yoga, cardio, and Adventures Sports video games aimed at constant movement. When the weather permits, youth go outside for recreation where they can play basketball shooting games, pickle ball, jump rope games, hula hoop challenges, and obstacle courses just to name a few. All youth eligible to participate in recreation activities have a personal work out plan developed via collaboration between the Recreation Specialist and the youth. Weekly physical fitness tests are conducted to track progress.

Carter meals are prepared by an outside vendor in a kitchen licensed by Maryland Department of Health. Meals were discontinued by the vendor on March 21, 2020, which forced the Department to re-locate the youth and staff to the Lower Eastern Shore Children's Center. Once food service was re-initiated again on May 18, 2020, the youth and staff returned to the facility. A member of DJS Food Service Management Team performs temperature spot checks of all meals to ensure that the food is being served at the proper temperature.

In order to better align DJS's resources with the needs of its youth, Carter will be closing effective June 30, 2020. The program will be re-located on the campus at Backbone Mountain Youth Center. Carter staff will be placed at other DJS facilities.

Detention Centers

Baltimore City Juvenile Justice Center (BCJJC)

In May 2020, a new superintendent of the BCJJC was appointed and brings over 20 years of experience working with at-risk youth.

All facility administrators continue to make weekly rounds to all the housing units to check on youth, staff, and operation of the facility.

Likewise, youth continue to receive earned incentives on a consistent weekly basis and no concerns have been brought to the administration's attention. Administrators continue to support and approve the weekly incentives within the restrictions in place as part of the Department's COVID-19 response.

Meals provided to youth at BCJJC meet federal requirements in terms of nutrition and portion size and are monitored by the dietary manager. Extra portions are provided at dinnertime meals, if requested.

To date, there have been 4 BCJJC youth who have tested positive for COVID-19. They were placed in medical isolation during their recovery period, consistent with the direction of the DJS Medical Director and infection control practices. The youth in medical isolation received education packets to complete during school hours and other activities, such as journals, books, reading Nooks, cards, and puzzles books. DJS also relaxed its prohibition of having mobile technology inside the secure portion of the facility and provided youth on medical isolation access to smart phones to communicate with family on a daily basis.

As a point of clarification, quarantine differs from medical isolation, in that quarantine is used for youth who are not exhibiting symptoms and have not tested positive but may have been exposed to a COVID-19 positive individual. Similar to medical isolation, the DJS Medical Director must order youth and/or units to be quarantined. While quarantined, youth have more flexibility to engage in activities than youth who are on medical isolation. Youth on quarantine units were provided school work, handheld games, puzzle books, cards, phones and wireless radio headphones to aid with coping skills, boredom and stress reduction. Youth in units that were temporarily quarantined received all required services including behavioral health services such as weekly individual and group sessions, crisis management, and medication management. All youth in medical isolation were seen by mental health daily. Specialty psychoeducational groups, such as substance use groups, continued on the unit during the quarantine period.

BCJJC has always provided soap for youth during morning hygiene, during bathroom breaks, and shower time. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the facility has increased and encouraged frequent hand washing of youth and staff to decrease the spread of germs. The facility has always had soap and hand sanitizer available for the youth and staff.

All youth were issued soap to keep in their rooms at all times to provide unimpeded access. Frequent unit groups were held to educate youth on COVID-19, the precautions, and how to help decrease the spread of the virus. To document the topics taught and reinforce the principles of hygiene and social distancing to prevent the spread of COVID-19, a form was developed for all youth and staff to sign. This is a standard procedure for all educational groups held and youth may choose not to sign the form.

With respect to the JJMU's concern about youth with mental health issues being placed on the Intensive Services Unit (ISU), the admission criteria as set forth in DJS policy and procedure permit placement of youth with psychological conditions on that unit. Specifically, the admission criteria for the ISU include:

1. Involvement in incidents that represent an imminent threat to facility security, staff, or youth safety;
2. Violent or aggressive behavior resulting in significant injury to self and/or others;
3. Repeated inability to manage aggressive behavior, including but not limited to, assaultive behavior, property destruction, AWOL risk, or sexual acting out; and
4. Psychological conditions affecting the youth's behavior and functioning coupled with a lack of response to an established Guarded Care Plan or Behavioral Contract.

Youth who have been assigned to the ISU receive individualized interventions and other methods of dealing with their emotions to reduce the acts of aggression. DJS direct care staff receive training including Aggression Replacement, Extended Verbal De-Escalation, and Identifying Youth Triggers. These additional trainings are offered and covered by Hope Health Behavioral Health staff, during monthly unit staff meetings.

Additionally, discussion with Behavioral Health, Direct Care, Case Management, and Pod Manager staff are required prior to a youth being placed on ISU. If any one party is not available or does not agree, a Superintendent's override would be required.

For the youth referenced by the JJMU who displayed signs of psychological distress, the Superintendent determined that it would be most beneficial for the youth to be placed on the ISU. As mentioned above, the youth would have increased access to behavioral health services and support in a setting with fewer youth, which provides greater opportunity for one-on-one attention, when needed. With respect to the youth's needs, Behavioral Health staff were able to work more closely with the youth, develop an individualized treatment plan, and address any possible medication concerns. The youth remained on the ISU unit for the required 14 days and was released back into the regular population without further incident.

For youth on the ISU, behavioral health staff created special activity packets and therapeutic tools as well as coordinated phone calls with family members.

Youth at BCJJC can participate in programs including the Empowering Minds King Program, Open Minds Yoga, Dialogue, Paint Like a C.H.A.M.P. Art Program, family engagement activities, life skills program, Lunch with Dad, and religious services. These programs engage youth as well as teach them important life skills. Programming at BCJJC has been impacted by restrictions imposed by the Department in

response to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. For more details about DJS's efforts to address programming in DJS facilities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, please see the Introduction section of this Response.

The current behavioral health contractor provides services that include, at a minimum, weekly psychoeducational groups, individual sessions, assessments, crisis debriefing, case consultation with staff and psychiatric services. Some of the evidence based therapeutic modalities that are utilized in individual and group sessions include: CBT, DBT, brief-solution focused therapy, trauma informed care, motivational interviewing, among other modalities.

Cheltenham

DJS continues to monitor all incidents that occur and review them for accuracy in reporting and appropriate actions. The shift commander is responsible for reviewing all incidents that occurred during his/her shift and commenting accordingly. Likewise, facility superintendents review all incidents. When policy mandates, the OIG's office conducts a review as well. Shift commander comments are addressed during administrative incident report audits and reviewed with supervisory staff in question for quality improvement.

Regarding Incidents 163042 and 162962, incident reporting protocols were followed appropriately. With respect to Incidents 162887 and 162911, shift commanders were reminded to use proper policy terminology in their assessment of the incidents.

In reference to Incident 163132, administrative review indicated that staff responded in accordance with policy and no injuries were noted.

Regarding Incident 162894, an administrative review determined that the youth acted unexpectedly and there were no previous indicators of issues between the two youth. Facility staff were posted correctly and all youth were seated in the classroom engaged in school work. Administrative review concluded that the staff responded appropriately in accordance with DJS policy and procedures.

Administration at Cheltenham has always and continues to solicit and encourage all staff members to provide additional structured programming for youth. Staff interested in providing programming are supported in their efforts via supplies, access to programming areas, time, and appropriate staffing. Various programs such as kite making, paintings for frontline workers, and puzzle contests to name a few are currently taking place at the facility. For more details about DJS's efforts to address programming in DJS facilities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, please see the Introduction section of this Response.

Hickey

Hickey has maintained the required staffing ratios set forth by the ACA and PREA to safely operate a juvenile facility.

Regarding Incident 162089, a formal investigation was conducted by Management, Maryland State Police, Child Protective Services, and the DJS Office of Inspector General. As a result of its investigation, MSP charged the staff with Second Degree Assault. The involved staff was disciplined in accordance with the Department's Standards of Conduct and has separated from the agency.

Regarding the transgender girl placed at Hickey, the youth was seen daily by behavioral health staff. Additionally, behavioral health, direct care and case management staff consulted weekly to develop behavioral plans to support the youth.

Waxter

Waxter has sufficient space to provide the following services at the facility: various medical and mental health services, urine and blood screenings/testing and x-rays, and prenatal, perinatal, and postpartum care. Waxter also offers a weekly medical clinic for the young women to be seen by a licensed pediatrician and/or the DJS Medical Director, a licensed pediatrician with a specialization in adolescent medicine.

Youth requiring specialized care or dental care are referred to off-site services in consultation with the licensed pediatrician and the DJS Medical Director.

All pregnant youth admitted to Waxter have access to prenatal, perinatal, and postpartum care under the guidance of the DJS Medical Director and University of Maryland Labor and Delivery midwives. Bi-weekly clinics are held by midwives to provide care to pregnant youth residing at Waxter.

Girls who present with a history of sexual abuse and mental or trauma related disorders require consultation with a psychologist and psychiatrist and are referred accordingly.

DJS nurses have qualifications ranging from Associate's to Master's degrees and have pre-requisite knowledge of medical-surgical care; however, consistent with their licensing requirements, cannot advise patients or prescribe medication. The youth described by the JJMU had some confusion about her decision, but was ultimately given support and assurance. The matter was addressed with all the nurses by the Health Administrator and the DJS Medical Director.

The process of youth reporting medical issues and concerns has been discussed with all youth to remind them of the numerous ways to initiate a report such as, placing sick call, speaking with direct care staff or supervisor on duty, or speaking with a child advocate.

Regarding Grievance 16367, the youth was offered medication to ease her pain and then referred to the pediatrician for further assessment, in accordance with medical protocol.

DJS has a full-time maintenance staff working at the Waxter facility between the hours of 7:00 am - 3:30 pm Monday through Friday. Maintenance staff are on-call for emergencies that occur after hours. As issues arise and are reported, appropriate steps are taken to address the issue promptly. Pest control is performed on a regular monthly basis, temperature issues are addressed as needed, and issues reported regarding excessive condensation have been addressed. DJS maintenance staff also perform daily, weekly, and monthly inspections to address all physical plant and cleanliness concerns. Contractual cleaning services have been increased to ensure a clean and safe environment is provided for the youth and staff.

Noyes

The agency staffing ratio is one staff to eight youth during waking hours and one staff to sixteen youth during sleeping hours. These ratios are national best practices for juvenile facilities, and are required to be in compliance with the ACA and PREA.

The previously-vacant positions for the Group Life Manager have been filled as of May 2020. An RA Supervisor position is currently being processed for recruitment.

Regarding Incident 162846, a management investigation determined that staff actions were inappropriate. The staff member was held accountable through the Department's Standards of Conduct.

Regarding Incident 162701, administrative review indicated that there was no staff neglect and the facility was operating under proper staffing ratios. Staff was retrained following the incident.

Incident 162446 involved an allegation with an MSDE teacher. DJS's Inspector General, CPS, and MSP were all notified. MSP declined to pursue criminal charges. Based on a finding from CPS, MSDE held the teacher accountable in accordance with their standards of conduct.

Lower Eastern Shore Children's Center

DJS appreciates the positive comments made by the JJMU in regards to the importance of the youth advisory board as well as the positive comments regarding the attentive and compassionate care provided at this facility.

In response to the JJMU's concerns, DJS Maintenance has completed the installation of stainless steel bathroom fixtures at LESCC.

Western Maryland Children's Center

Regarding Incident 162863, DJS administrators agree that the use of the observation room in that instance should have been labeled a seclusion although the Department notes that the amount of time the youth spent in the observation room was less than 10 minutes.

After two previous candidates declined the position, a candidate has been identified for the Recreation Director position at WMCC and is currently involved in the pre-screening process.

Private Programs

[Silver Oak Academy \(SOA\)](#)

Pages 13 through 15

Page 13

1. “The average daily population of youth placed at Silver Oak decreased by 1 (from 42 to 41) in the first quarter of 2020 when compared to the first quarter of 2019. Comparing the same time periods, youth fights and assaults increased by 47% and physical restraints of youth by staff increased by 41%.”

SOA Response: Over the report period, Silver Oak Academy had a total of 31 fights/assaults and total of 17 restraints. Of those incidents, 4 students were involved in 10 of the incidents. Common patterns involved in these incidents include student adjusting to new medication, medication refusal, significant clinical such trauma work and family issues, all of which compromise the student’s ability to function within the program. Additional supports and clinical intervention has aided our students developing more prosocial coping skills.

Page 14

2. “Lapses of supervision, lack of structure and unprofessional behavior by overnight staff in particular continues to be a concern as the following incidents demonstrate.”
 - a. “In 162897, which occurred shortly before 11 pm, a staffer (staffer A) started yelling at a youth and confronting him face-to-face for not turning out his lights in his room. The youth retreated inside his room and staffer A continued to yell at him from outside the room door. While this power struggle was taking place, other youth exited their rooms and were walking around the communal part of the dormitory (the "dayroom"). Another staffer who was seated nearby did not intervene to de-escalate the situation between the agitated staffer and the youth or try to do crowd control with the other youth who were awake and walking around the dayroom.

Staffer A left the unit and returned with several other staff. One of the staffers who returned with Staffer A to the unit, Staffer B, turned on all the lights on the floor and insisted on having a meeting with the youth to discuss the importance of following directives. While trying to effectuate his aim, Staffer B yelled as he summoned and corralled youth (many of whom had been sleeping up to this point) out of their rooms. One youth, while standing near his room door, voiced frustration about being woken up by Staffer B. In response, Staffer A confronted the youth by walking up to him and yelling in his face. Staffer A and B then entered the youth's room and attempted to physically restrain him. Staffer A left the youth's room. Staffer B continued to restrain

the youth and attempted to escort him out of his room and off the unit to process with him. The youth managed to break free from Staffer B, ran up to Staffer A and punched him. Staffer A fought back and had to be pulled off the youth by several other youth and staff.”

SOA Response: Once the incident was reported, the staff person was immediately suspended and placed on administrative leave. Additionally, a child abuse report was made to Carroll County Department of Social Services, Child Protective Services (CPS). The CPS investigation ruled our physical abuse in this incident. However, Silver Oak Academy terminated the staff for his behavior. Silver Oak retrained Night Staff on interactive supervision, security and safety immediately following this incident. Additionally, retraining on safety polices for all staff has proceed and is ongoing. Topics include: control center, evening program structure and elements, campus movement, cottage group systems, perimeter security, suicide prevention, emergency action and incident reporting. All training completed by staff is documented in the employee files.

DJS Response: The program submitted the incident report in compliance with the DJS Incident Reporting Policy. As indicated in their response, the staff was placed on administrative leave due to his aggressive nature during the incident. Licensing and Monitoring (L&M) reviewed the videotape of the incident during a weekly visit on 02-24-2020. The staff was attacked by the youth and afterwards the staff had to be restrained by other staff as he attempted to go after the youth. The youth had alleged that staff had choked him during the restraint (this was not seen during the video review). CPS was contacted and CPS cleared the staff and closed the case on 03-18-20. As stated in their response, SOA found that the staff’s actions were unacceptable during the incident and terminated him on 03-20-20. L&M received documentation confirming termination of the staff involved, and the retraining of night staff.

b. “In Incident 162886, a youth reported to staff several times that another youth was threatening to assault him and so he didn't feel safe. Daytime staff made sure that the two youths stayed separated. According to the youth who felt unsafe, the threatening youth stated to him "wait until the day staff are gone and night shift comes on. Then I'll get you". The threatening youth did subsequently enter the other youth's room and assaulted him leaving a bruise on the youth's face while night staff were inattentive or otherwise occupied.”

SOA Response: The students that were involved in this incident were roommates. The antagonist of this incident had been having difficulties with behavioral end emotional dysregulation throughout the shift. The antagonist’s roommate confronted his roommates acting out which escalated the antagonist which led to a physical altercation. Staff intervened immediately, thereby there was no delay in separating the youth. Prior to the incident, the student who was involved with the assault was up out of his room and going in and out of other youth rooms.

After following up with the incident and reviewing the documentation, the youth stated that he had informed staff he was threatened early that night. Staff confronted the issue before the incident happened and stated to the youth in the room the door must stay open. During the shift change staff was informed to monitor the youths' room for suspected behavior. There is no video footage of this incident since the incident occurred in the bedroom. Each time there is an incident the camera is reviewed approximately 10 minutes before and after the incident. If there was any movement the video would have been saved like all other incidents. During this incident there was no movement or issues 10 minutes prior to the incident happening.

DJS Response: The program submitted the incident report in compliance with the DJS Incident Reporting Policy. The incident happened on 2/22/20. After the incident, the youth who received a bruise was given ice by the Medical Technician on site. A review of the MIR (Medical Incident Report) indicates that the youth was seen by the program's nurse on 2/24/20 and no bruise was noted on the youth's face. The report states that no treatment was needed at the time of the visit. In addition to weekly reviews of incident reports in the DJS Incident Reporting Database, L&M reviews the reports with the program during monthly and or quarterly monitoring visits. During these visits, L&M also reviews video footages when available. In this case, there was no video as the incident happened in the bedroom.

c. "Incident 162464, three youth who shared a room together got into a fight while night time staff was distracted with medication distribution. By the time staff finally noticed the kids were fighting and responded, one of the kids had a bloody nose and there were visible bloody injuries on the other two youth."

SOA Response: During the incident two night staff were administering medication to another student. Additionally, staff were positioned and making appropriate rounds. During room checks/ rounds, staff identified a student disruption in a room where staff separated the students, assessed the need for medical care, and processed the incident with the student. From review of the incident, staff was prompt in separating the students and assisting the student with bloody nose. After each incident there is a review that happens between the students and staff that were involved. This process is normally done during the problem resolution process and is verbally discussed during the house meetings or during the Positive Organizational Culture (POC) group time. During this meeting, the students and the staff talk about the issue that happened and work through the problem. During this incident staff did what they were supposed to which was making rounds and positioning themselves at higher risk areas.

DJS Response: The program submitted the incident report in compliance with the DJS Incident Reporting Policy. During monthly and or quarterly monitoring visits, the L&M Unit reviews incidents reports including video footage when available. There was no video to review for this incident as it happened in the bedroom. A review of the MIR (Medical Incident Report) indicates that the youth was seen by the program's nurse on 1/30/20 and no treatment was

needed. The incident report indicates that staff provided care to the youth immediately after the incident on 1/29/20.

3. “Refresher training on basic security protocols such as proper staff positioning/posting, and prompt de-escalation in situations that can lead to aggression that can also help reduce the number of aggressive incidents and need for physical restraints as the following incidents illustrate.”

Page 15

a. “In an incident 162310 one youth became irate at another youth and threw the other youth's chess pieces to the ground and then stormed off toward the bathroom. The staffer who was present did not intervene in this interaction. The seated youth then got up from his chess game and followed the first youth into the bathroom and the two of them began fighting. The staffer did intervene to break up the fight. After the altercation, the youth who threw the chess pieces was taken out of the area and counseled. When he returned to the unit, he walked with purpose to the bathroom and started fighting the other youth again.”

SOA Response: The staff did not intervene. Subsequently, the staff person was retrained on interactive supervision. The youth involved in this incident completed a problem resolution process with no further incident.

DJS Response: L&M received documentation confirming that the staff member was retrained on interactive supervision on 1/19/20. L&M periodically reviews personnel files to ensure that documentation of training is in each employee’s file.

b. In Incident 162359, two youth entered the bathroom intent on fighting. They were both restrained and removed from the bathroom and staff began processing the situation with both youth. Other staff present did not remain posted at the bathroom and the bathroom area was left unsupervised. Shortly after the first fight, two additional youth entered the bathroom and began fighting.

SOA Response: The staff received disciplinary action related to not being on post. One staff member was terminated for not ensuring the safety of the students. The additional staff person was suspended and returned to be retrained on program procedure, more specifically the morning program, and interactive supervision. The youth involved in this incident completed a problem resolution process with no further incidents.

DJS Response: L&M received documentation confirming that one staff member involved received disciplinary action on 1/23/20, one was terminated on 1/29/20, and one was retrained on interactive supervision for the morning program on 2/5/20. L&M periodically reviews personnel files to ensure that documentation of training and any personnel action are in each employee’s file.

4. "Visitation has been banned due to the current COVID-19 crisis and Silver Oak has not increased the number or duration of phone calls beyond two 15-minute calls per week. Several youth requested more opportunities to check in with loved ones. Administrators should prioritize arrangements for increased family contact. Comprehensive access to video conferencing with parents in lieu of suspended in-person visitation should be provided to all youth."

SOA Response: Silver Oak Academy did suspend visitation per DJS and State mandates. Students are able to have extra phone time in addition to video calls to their families. Students have the choice on the type of call and are dependent on staff coverage. Collaboration between, Case managers and group living staff has allowed for those additional calls. Currently, students are making daily calls to family coverage dependent. Family sessions are being offered by clinical staff.

DJS Response: Due to the COVID19 pandemic, the program suspended all visitations on March 23, 2020. As to the communication between youth and their parents, on May 29, 2020, L&M interviewed four students. All four students stated that their daily phone calls were between 15 to 20 minutes, and also they use Google Duo and Zoom to remain in communication with their families. The students stated they have been receiving daily calls for at least the past two to three weeks. All four students did not express any concerns as it relates to remaining in communication with their parents. L&M received and reviewed documentation from the program as it relates to daily calls for five randomly selected students. The report indicates the date and time of the contact, the type (phone, Zoom, Duo, FaceTime), the person contacted, and the reason of the call (COVID19 Update, family therapy). It indicates if the student refused to participate in the call, and also provides a reason why a daily call did not happen on a specific day. The calls started on May 18, 2020, and they were only three days when calls were not completed (case manager in court, meetings, not on site -Memorial Day...). L&M regularly conducts interviews with youth at the program and will continue to monitor.

[VisionQuest Morning Star \(VQMS\)](#)

Page 37

1. "Morning Star should establish a youth advisory board to provide the young people under their care a voice in daily programming. Several youth indicated an interest in life skills including learning about budgeting and finance and studying for the test to receive their driver's learner's permit."

VQMS Response: The program solicits regular feedback from the youth during circles, direction board and other groups regarding programmatic ideas, activities, events and improvements. Suggestion sheets and signup sheets for events are often posted in the dining hall for all youth and staff. The program will consider the establishment of a formal advisory board. In response to Life skills, it is a part of the programs schedule. Youth are provided with the driver's handbook to study if requested, they have been involved with groups that discuss but are not limited to:

budgeting, checking, savings account and resume writing. The program is looking to expand its life skills curriculum opportunities.

DJS Response: L&M will continue to monitor to ensure that VQMS is in compliance with COMAR 14.31.06 and VQMS' policies as it relates to the life skills.

**MARYLAND STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
- RESPONSE**



Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

June 19, 2020

MSDE Response to the Juvenile Justice Monitoring Unit's First Quarter Report

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has reviewed the Juvenile Justice Monitoring Unit's (JJMU) 2020 first quarter report in relation to the provision of educational services within the Department of Juvenile Services' (DJS) residential facilities.

Maryland State Department of Education in DJS Facilities

Juvenile Services Education System (JSES) Timeline of Response to the Public Health Crisis- COVID 19

On March 12, 2020, the Maryland State Superintendent closed all schools effective Monday, March 16 through March 27. Local school systems (LSS) used this time period to develop their Continuity of Learning Plans for implementation during the first week of April. On March 26, 2020, LSS's were closed until April 24, 2020. On April 17, school closures were extended until May 15. The final closure announcement was made on May 6 for the rest of the year.

In response to the notifications above, the Juvenile Services Education Schools (JSES) began to prepare immediately for possible closure. The JSES continued normal school operations until March 25, 2020, a time frame that was beyond that of LSSs. The JSES curriculum, instruction, special education, and technology teams worked collaboratively with JSES teachers and principals to develop an effective schedule for virtual learning. The schedule for instruction was designed to utilize available resources and provide continuity of learning that was in alignment with local school systems. Once plans were in place, and prior to implementation, the JSES worked collaboratively with DJS leadership through a workgroup that was specifically developed to discuss Continuity of Learning Plan to ensure a smooth transition, effective communication, and access to resources using the state provided Google Drive. On multiple pages, the JJMU report states, "at the time of the writing, JSES has begun to implement virtual learning and distribution of education-related packets." This is a misleading statement since the JSES began providing both instructional materials and virtual instruction on April 6, 2020, which occurred prior to the writing of the JJMU 1st quarter report.

Below is the implementation timeline since March 16, 2020, to the writing of this response.

Date	Steps Taken
3.16.2020	MSDE JSES coordinators began working on content instructional materials to be used if schools were closed. (Math, ELA, SS, Science, and CTE)
3.18.2020	Additional Nooks were purchased and loaded with 75 books – Waiting to be distributed.
3.18.2020	<p>Worked with schools and the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) to determine streaming capacity based on bandwidth infrastructure and classroom technology. (two to three classrooms at a time.)</p> <p>MSDE began to work on a virtual class streaming plan based on student enrollment and courses.</p>
3.18.2020	The JSES requested support from DJS with cleaning of schools.
3.19.2020	Surveyed teachers and principals – based on plans and suggestions moving forward if the JSES schools closed.
3.20.2020	DJS closed J. DeWeese Carter Center and students were moved to Lower Eastern Shore Children’s Center, due to the unavailability of food service for students.
3.23.2020	DJS reduced class size to 10 people per classroom.
3.24.2020	The JSES contacted local school systems to determine how they were providing materials and instruction to students in their districts.
3.24.2020	The JSES Head Quarter team reviewed virtual streaming schedules to finalize for principals and staff.
3.25.2020	Professional Development – All JSES school staff began preparing instructional materials for students in coordination with instructional material provided by JSES coordinators.
3.25.2020	Scheduled technology conference call regarding video streaming. Call scheduled for 3.26.2020 for 2 PM with DJS and MSDE JSES.

3.25.2020	<p>Conference call with principals and Field Directors – Planning for closure – Plans developed for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Daily conference calls with teachers teleworking (all principals opened up free conference lines) - Creating lesson plans - Constructing virtual learning school schedules - Work distribution including delivery to students/pick-up/grading - Grading – Power School updates - Follow up with DJS (communication schedule) - PD schedule available for teachers - streaming processes were developed - Proposed draft schedule for principals developed - Three documents provided for principals’ reference - How to update iPads, Installing zoom, and Zoom meetings
3.26.2020	<p>Weekly Professional Development and Training Schedule start date set for Friday March 27 to April 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School counselors and school psychologists – Fridays 8:30 – 9:30 - Special education teachers- Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:30 – 3:30 - Curriculum writers and content leads – Everyday 9:00 – 10:30 - Instructional coaches – Everyday 1:30 – 2:30 <p>The schedule above outlines specific times for professional development as JSES built a digital learning program. The JSES coordinators included principals on calendar invites for their teachers.</p> <p>This schedule started on March 26, 2020, and the schedule was adjusted once JSES began streaming into classrooms.</p>
3.27.2020	<p>Bandwidth stress test conducted in at all school sites.</p> <p>Blended Workgroup Meeting with DJS/MSDE discussed the virtual streaming implementation plan.</p>
3.30.2020	<p>New Nooks were delivered to treatment facilities first and then delivered to detention facilities as available. Carter Center Nooks were redistributed since the school was closed.</p>
3.30.2020	<p>Weekly Streaming Lead Teacher Meetings began.</p>
3.30.2020	<p>Weekly CTE Teacher Meetings began.</p>

3.30.2020	Special Education Teacher Meetings began twice a week.
3.31.2020	Blended Workgroup Meeting with DJS/MSDE conducted for virtual streaming implementation.
4.1.2020	Google Share Drive created for MSDE to provide DJS staff with maryland.gov emails and access to all COVID 19 resources. (master schedule, student schedules, best practices for Resident Assistance support, etc.)
4.2.2020	MSDE meeting with DJS leadership, facility Superintendents and Superintendent designees to review the Virtual Streaming Implementation Plan, give access to the share folders, and provide MSDE direct contact information for the Field Director and technology staff for support during implementation. Blended Workgroup Meeting with DJS/MSDE was conducted for virtual streaming implementation.
4.3.2020	The document titled “Monday” was shared with DJS leadership and placed in each Superintendents share folder. The document provided step by step support in preparation for the first day (Monday, April 6th) and detailed morning events.
4.5.2020	The Maryland Department of Information Technology and MSDE Chief Information Officer (CIO) announced that ZOOM was hacked and MSDE staff were not allowed to use ZOOM to host any meetings moving forward. MSDE created a new schedule for Google Hangouts and provided DJS leadership and Superintendents shared drives with the updated information as a temporary solution due to the vulnerability. The streaming schedule did not change, only the platform for streaming was adjusted.
4.6.2020	Blended Workgroup Meeting with DJS/MSDE was conducted for virtual streaming implementation. MSDE CIO provided MSDE JSES with access to Web-Ex for streaming solutions.

4.6.2020	<p>A new staff professional development and virtual streaming support schedule was implemented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compliance coordinator support for office hours: M-F 7:30-8:30 - Media specialist/individualized learning coordinator support for office hours: M-F 8:00-9:00am - School counselor and psychologist meeting: Friday 8:30-9:30 - CTE lead teacher meetings: Tues. and Thurs. 9:00-9:45 - Special education coordinator support office hours: M-F-10:00-11:00 - CTE teacher meetings: Tues. and Thurs. 10:00-10:45a.m. - Instructional technology support office Hours: M, W, F- 11:00-11:30 - Academic coach support office hours: M, W, F-11:00-12:00 - Power school support office hours: W- 12:00-12:30 - Instructional coach meetings: M-F 1:30-2:30 - Special education teacher meetings: Tues. and Thurs. 2:30-3:30 - Lead teacher meetings: F 3:00-4:00 - Principal-school based staff meetings: daily:- time varies by school site - Content streaming planning meetings: weekly:- one hour a week- time varies by subject/content
4.6-10.2020	<p>MSDE Field Director and technology support staff visited all JSES schools to deliver Chromebooks. The team also provided any additional needed tech support to ensure the virtual streaming equipment and classrooms were able to provide instruction.</p>
4.9.2020	<p>Blended Workgroup Meeting with DJS/MSDE was conducted for virtual streaming implementation.</p>
4.10.2020	<p>MSDE updated logins and resources for virtual streaming on WebEx and shared with DJS staff and Superintendents. The streaming schedule did not change, only the platform for streaming was amended.</p>
4.10.2020	<p>The JSES began weekly school counselor meetings.</p>
4.13.2020	<p>The JSES mailed 3rd quarter report cards and Special Education Progress Reports to the students' mailing address.</p>
4.15.2020	<p>Blended Workgroup Meeting with DJS/MSDE was cancelled. MSDE had provided tech support to all facilities and virtual streaming had begun. There were no agenda items from DJS.</p>

	The JSES completed the Continuity of Learning Plan.
4.15.2020	The JSES sent written correspondences to parents/guardians of special education students informing them of special education services provided during COVID-19.
4.15.2020	Principals and HQ scheduled daily observations of virtual streaming classes.
4.22.2020	MSDE and DJS met to discuss virtual streaming, instructional work schedules, and strategies for overall student success.
4.24.2020	MSDE provided DJS with the Strategies for Success document to be implemented in the facilities. The document was based on the meeting held on 4.22.
4.20-27.2020	Additional Nooks were provided to Western Maryland Children’s Center (WMCC), Baltimore City Juvenile Justice Center (BCJJC), Hickey, and Cheltenham. Parents of special education students were called and informed about special education services provided during COVID-19.
4.27.2020	Case management and additional support classes were created for special education students. The JSES met with Green Ridge Superintendent and both Executive Directors for DJS to discuss scheduling and learning packets
4.28.2020	The JSES Continuity of Learning Plan was uploaded to the MSDE/JSES website.
5.1.2020	The JSES met with the Office of Public Defender and Maryland Disability Rights staff.
5.4.2020	The JSES provided additional Nooks to Waxter and Noyes. Most spring facility meetings with the DJS Superintendents and JSES leadership completed (exceptions: Carter, Cullen (5-13), WMCC (5-13).
5.5.2020	The JSES tech support staff visited Cheltenham to assist in setting up streaming rooms, to locate access points, and offered additional support.

	The JSES uploaded the new Organizational chart to the JSES website.
5.8.2020	Starting on 5.8, the JSES updated all instructional material boxes to include individual student schedules at the request of DJS. The schedules were provided previously on the shared drive between JSES and DJS.
5.15.2020	The JSES updated the master schedule with student and special education schedules by combining them into one document.
5.18.2020	The new schedule format was shared with both Executive Directors for DJS and information provided about locating them in the School/Facility shared drive. The new schedule will be updated weekly to ensure accuracy with the student population in alignment with their units and facilities.
5.19.2020	The JSES reviewed the new schedule with a DJS Executive Director. The Executive Director informed-MSDE that some DJS Superintendents did not have a working knowledge of using Maryland's Google Drive. The JSES Field Director provided her email and work cell phone number should anyone need support. Very few DJS staff members asked for additional support or resources.
5.20.2020	The JSES provided the DJS Executive Director an instruction guide for the DJS Superintendents on how to access the Google Drive and download needed documents.
5.20.2020	The JSES provided DJS with attendance data information for the three weeks prior.
5.22.2020	The JSES School Performance Team met with the Deputy Secretary for DJS to review the webinar attendance data and answered any questions his team may have had regarding attendance and support. The JSES team also assisted the Deputy Secretary with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How to navigate the Maryland Government Google Shared Drive; - Reviewing the Webex attendance codes for DJS RA's (to be used on the DJS computers where possible with quarantined students); - How to access the recorded webinar folder.
5.26.2020	The JSES technology team provided DJS Superintendents with Google Drive training.

5.26.2020	The JSES team met with the MSDE Deputy Superintendent about the 2020 Summer Educational Plan.
5.27.2020	Initial conversation was conducted with the Deputy Secretary for DJS regarding summer school planning needs.

The JSES Student Work and Schedules for Learning

The instructional work packets used during digital learning are not replacing on-site or in-person instruction. They are aligned with the standards shared by MSDE to all local school systems during the COVID-19 pandemic. Instructional packets are continually sent to facilities and used for enrichment activities and to support the lessons presented to students during the live streaming classes.

The statement, “roll out of virtual learning platforms were delayed due to issues with technology” (pg. 40) is inaccurate. Virtual instruction was scheduled to begin on April 6, 2020. Despite the hacking of ZOOM that occurred over the weekend prior, the JSES technology team was able to move the entire plan to a different platform (Google Hangouts) and ensured instruction began on the targeted date, April 6, 2020. The JSES has continuously provided instruction without interruption or cancellation.

The JJMU 1st Quarter Report states on page 3, “At the beginning of the public health crisis, the six hour school day operated with teachers on site which kept youth occupied and afforded opportunities to help students to continue to make academic progress. However, during April of 2020, the MSDE moved to a severely truncated school schedule (approximately two-and-a-half hours in length) with learning packets and virtual learning replacing in-person teacher instruction.”

The statement above is not accurate. The JSES provided a detailed schedule to ensure students would have continuity of learning. Below is the information that was provided to DJS:

Instructional Work Strategies

1. Ensure students always take their instructional materials (packets) with them any time they go to the school and attend live streaming classes.
2. In addition to attending the streaming lessons, students should at a minimum work on each area of content instructional material for an hour a day during the school week.
3. If your school has extra rooms not being used some days for video streaming, then the students could be taken to the school to work on their instructional materials during school hours.
4. Students should follow the schedule below on the days they do not attend streaming classes.
 - a. School Hours 8:15am-4:00pm.
 - b. Morning 8:15-11:15
 1. Monday – Friday
 2. Students should spend 60 minutes each on Math Instructional Materials,

Social Studies Instructional Materials, and Self-Selected Reading

c. Afternoon 1:00-4:00

1. Monday-Friday

2. Students should spend 60 minutes each on English Instructional Materials, Science or Elective Instructional Materials, and Self-Selected Reading. d. Some students will have classes on APEX instead of instructional materials and should have access to complete that coursework on the computer

Virtual instruction includes a minimum participation of three certified teachers: two general education teachers, and a special education teacher. This format ensures that if there is a personal reason or technology issue with one teacher, classes will continue at all times. The JSES has been able to provide all sessions with no cancellations.

All sessions are 45 minutes in length with 15 minutes in between sessions to provide for adequate transition for youth to move to the correct classroom. In addition, the statement that, “Student packets and virtual lessons do not correspond to their grade level” (pg. 40) is inaccurate information. Most students are scheduled into at least five courses based on the academic schedule they were enrolled in prior to the crisis and closure of schools across the State. -Special Education students have additional classes on Monday and Friday, as well as, their case management and support time that could equal up to 10 sessions a week. All students have the opportunity to participate in the additional support classes as needed. The student schedule below is an actual example of a special education student schedule:

Mondays: Out of General Education (OGE), math, English, and science

Tuesdays virtual webinar schedule:

Alg. 1	8:15 - 9:00
Am. Gov't	9:15 - 10:00
Biology	1:00 - 1:45
English	2:00 - 2:45
Entrepreneurship	3:00 - 3:45

Wednesdays: Work on completion of instructional materials

Thursdays: Continue work on instructional materials and provided an opportunity for questions and answers support on the unit- by phone

Fridays: OGE support in entrepreneurship and social studies

The JJMU 1st Quarter Report states on page 11, “School instruction is limited to high school courses.” This statement is not accurate as instructional materials and virtual learning opportunities are provided for middle school courses. Middle School classes are streamed every Monday and Friday.

On page 40, the report states, “Staffing shortages at some facilities, such as Cheltenham Youth Detention Center, prevented students from moving to the school to access virtual learning.” The JSES staffing shortages have not impacted virtual instruction. In fact, the design plan created by JSES organized teacher groups strategically to ensure that any teacher shortages would not impact student learning. The JSES has provided virtual learning as scheduled. Virtual classes can be viewed from any technology platform that connects to the internet.

STATE COMPARISONS

From April 28, 2020 - April 30, 2020, the JSES team reached out to other juvenile correctional facilities across the United States to learn how other states were providing instruction and to collaborate for best practices. Based on the information obtained, the plan currently implemented in JSES aligned with facilities in other states that had a similar level of crisis based on population, cases, and civilian deaths.

- New York: Students were issued work packets and virtual education.
- Oregon: Students were issued work packets and online instruction for three hours a day.
- Texas: Students were issued packets in the unit/dorm.
- Virginia: Juvenile schools were closed when Virginia public schools closed. However, they were going to open back up for students to complete packets and participate in online instruction only.
- Wyoming: Students remained in the units/dorms and utilized Google Hangouts for educational purposes. Instruction was reduced to 5 hours a day.
- Arizona, Arkansas, Idaho, and Montana were continuing face-to-face instruction with reduced class sizes in most cases.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Charles H. Hickey School was able to complete the hiring and onboarding of a new special education teacher during the health crisis in April 2020. All four special education positions are now filled.

The JJMU shares on page 28-Grievance Number 16267 in which a youth requested extra help in school and requested to be evaluated for a learning disability. The report stated that she had not received an evaluation to date. At the Waxter school, a child find process was completed for the student mentioned in the grievance in a timely manner per IDEA and COMAR. The JJMU monitor was aware of this fact. The principal of the school communicated with the monitor on 5/13/20 regarding the child find process outcome.

On April 17, 2020, JSES sent parents a letter explaining that during the national COVID-19 pandemic, special education instruction was being provided through digital learning and that the Individualized Education Program (IEP) was being implemented, “to the greatest extent possible.” Parents were called and amendments to IEPs have been implemented with parental permission or IEP meetings have been scheduled.

All special education students have support classes embedded in their schedule on Mondays and/or Fridays. Additionally, students are scheduled to meet with their case manager at least once a week and have access to a special education teacher for questions and academic support every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday afternoon. All core content classes are being co-taught with a special education teacher and special education accommodations are built into each streaming lesson. School counselors and school psychologists are available to provide counseling support.

INSTRUCTION

Students within JSES have the opportunity to participate in online electives such as music appreciation, art appreciation, and creative writing through Apex Learning, if needed for graduation. Since many students enroll in JSES are overage and under-credited, the JSES has focused on providing students with course work needed for high school progression in order to earn credits. For high school graduation, students in Maryland only need one credit of fine arts; however, four credits of English are required for graduation. By providing credit-bearing opportunities for core courses requiring multiple credits for graduation, the JSES is ensuring there is a decreased gap in content knowledge and credits when a student return to their home school.

Students are also continuing their education in post-secondary opportunities. On page 31 the report states, “Administrators at JSES failed to pay tuition fees to community college in time for students to enroll in classes in the beginning of 2020” The JSES submits on time payments for post-secondary invoices. A new purchase order had to be created with the procurement office. The Charles H. Hickey School has three students that are currently enrolled in college coursework at Anne Arundel Community College.

JSES educators are provided with professional development sessions focused on the whole child to support instruction in a positive classroom climate and culture. A few of the topics presented have included the following:

- Only the Strong Survive: Advice, Admonitions, and Affirmations to Spark the Power Within
- Dismantling the School-to-Prison Pipeline: Removing Practices that Favor Incarcerations over Education
- Doing Time with our Boys: Family Engagement Strategies for Reaching Adjudicated Boys and Their Families
- Deliberate Discussions II: Adapting Deliberation Model for JSES Schools
- Drop the Hammer: Strategies to De-Escalate Student Behavior
- Coming into View: Supporting Students at the Root of Their Misbehavior
- Differentiation and How to Keep Students Engaged
- Cultural Relevant Instruction: Connecting Content, Culture, and Creating Impactful Educational Experiences
- Beyond Poverty and Trauma
- Impact of Opioids on Learners and Using Health Skills in the Classroom

- Deliberate Discussions I: How to Facilitate Tough Discussions in the Classroom

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

The JSES offers CTE courses-(Career Research and Development and Office Systems Management) that lead to the opportunity to test and receive a nationally recognized credential and certification (Microsoft Office Systems Specialist and Expert) certificate. The test can be given by each part of the Microsoft Office Systems such as Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Excel, and Microsoft Access. Currently, we are researching ancillary items to assist students in gaining these credentials at a high success rate.

The benefits for the students who attain credential(s) will include possession of a documented skill set that make them more marketable in the employment arena, are better prepared to be college, career and life ready. Credentials offer students authentic evidence of skill attainment that is relevant to careers and post-secondary education.

Students enrolled in JSES schools have the opportunity to enroll in the courses that will lead to an industry certification. Career and Technical Education programs such as cosmetology, construction, and agriculture include a series of courses and examinations completed throughout a student's high school career. There are no short-term CTE programs approved by MSDE Division of College and Career Readiness. Please note, there are no certificates or credentials that students will receive just by simply taking the course. Students must successfully complete the course requirements and then pass industry-recognized exams to obtain the certification. The JSES students are able to earn industry certifications from a variety of sources such as Flagger and Serve Safe. Students have the opportunity to earn credentials that they can use for employment upon release from a facility, as well as, provide courses in a CTE pathway for those who are enrolled for extended period of time. Since the classes students are enrolled in are approved MSDE courses, they should be accepted for transfer when the student returns to their local school system to continue the CTE pathway.

FACILITIES

The JJMU report expresses concerns over the facilities at the Waxter school and the JSES agrees with those concerns. The Waxter educational buildings lack the ability to follow the space guidelines in administering face-to-face instruction.

CONCLUSION

The MSDE JSES takes issue with the statement on page 39 that states, "JSES lacks the technical expertise to operate a functional school system." The JSES staff are highly qualified educators who are passionate about the students we serve and very quickly and effectively responded to providing students with a free and appropriate education during the state, national, and world health crisis.

The timeline provided at the beginning of this response shows the dates in which collaboration and communication with DJS, parents, and stakeholders have occurred. There were multiple collaboration

meetings held with DJS prior to April 6, 2020, and all Superintendents and DJS leadership have access to the state provided Google Drive and shared folders. Within these folders JSES has provided all of the needed information for the students to have academic success.

The JSES is relying on the partnership with DJS to support the education being provided to students. Documents to ensure support through best practices and suggestions for success have been provided to DJS. The DJS Resident Assistants sign into the virtual learning classes, while the teachers provide instruction, refer to the instructional materials for the week, answer questions, and support the student learning process.

The statement that the, “Chromebooks were dropped off by JSES for student use at DJS facilities, there was no communication from JSES to DJS staff about how to configure them” is inaccurate. During the Blended Learning Workgroup meetings, DJS leadership was informed on each agenda that the Chromebooks that were purchased was a multi-step process spanning more than a year. Delivery to the schools was phase I. The delivery schedule was provided to DJS and DJS was told the Chromebooks were to be locked in a secure place while the JSES worked with DoIT to prepare them for students use. There are more phases to the process that must occur before student use. This was communicated as well in person when the Chromebook delivery was made to each facility.

To ensure online streaming is not interrupted, the JSES has continued to provide tech support over the phone and in person when possible since the start of the Maryland state of emergency health crisis in March. Students and instruction are our top priorities at the JSES.