



**JUVENILE JUSTICE MONITORING UNIT
STATE OF MARYLAND**

2021 SECOND 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 incarcerated children and young people 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 original incident report documentation and related camera footage. The JJMU issues public reports covering each calendar quarter. These reports include data and analysis concerning treatment of and services provided to youth in DJS 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. 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 Second Quarter 2021 Report Compendium

The Maryland Juvenile Justice Monitoring Unit (JJMU) issues public reports covering each calendar quarter. The reports include data and analysis concerning treatment of and services provided to children and young people in Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) directly run and licensed facilities throughout Maryland. Enclosed please find the unit's compilation of 2021 second quarter reports.

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

The JJMU 2021 Second 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

August 2021

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 2021 second quarter report which offers an update on conditions in Department of Juvenile Services' (DJS) operated and licensed facilities.

During the second quarter, restrictions due to COVID-19 eased across DJS detention and placement centers as the number of active infections declined statewide. At the same time,

statewide efforts at vaccinating Maryland residents allowed DJS to begin opening up facility operations and led to improvements in conditions of confinement.

However, at time of writing, a variant strain of Covid-19 is causing a substantial uptick in positive cases in DJS facilities and across the State. Additionally, the vaccination rate for direct-care staff at DJS facilities lags behind the vaccination rate for the state of Maryland.

Incarcerated youth continue to remain vulnerable to the danger of severe illness. Staff in DJS facilities can mitigate this risk and protect themselves and the youth under their care by getting vaccinated.

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

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COVID-19 RESPONSE IN JUVENILE SERVICES' FACILITIES

COVID-19 Response in Juvenile Services' Facilities

During the second quarter, restrictions due to COVID-19 eased across DJS detention and placement centers as the number of active infections declined statewide. At the same time, statewide efforts at vaccinating Maryland residents allowed DJS to begin opening up facility operations and led to improvements in conditions of confinement.

- ✓ In-person visitation resumed at all facilities.
- ✓ Contracts for outside vendors are being accepted and vetted for future in-person programming.
- ✓ The option to use outside food as a youth incentive returned.
- ✓ DJS detention and placement centers have provided youth with MP3 players. Several youth have stated that the individual music players have been a useful coping mechanism.
- ✓ Interactive sports (such as basketball), recreational equipment such as playing cards and board games, and outside outings for youth in staff secure placement were re-approved.
- ✓ Juvenile justice stakeholders continue to work together to minimize the numbers of young people exposed to the physical and psychological threats posed by incarceration.
- ✓ In-person, teacher-led instruction resumed for the summer term beginning in July. Students are able to do credit recovery and earn elective credit in courses such as research and technical writing; contemporary U.S. issues; and next generation financial literacy. However, credit-bearing classes in core content areas for the summer term are not available, and the elective credits are limited to only a 1/2 credit for each course successfully completed.

Although there has been progress in controlling the spread of Covid-19 in DJS facilities, significant restrictions continue to remain in place. Efforts to mitigate against the spread of infection are complicated by the lack of universal vaccination among DJS staff and the widespread circulation of a more contagious variant of the virus. During the second quarter, an outbreak of COVID-19 at Waxter detention center for girls resulted in 7 youth testing positive for COVID-19 in addition to two staff. At the end of July of 2021, an outbreak at the Hickey detention center resulted in 5 staff and 5 youth becoming infected. Incarcerated youth will remain

vulnerable to the danger of severe illness until more DJS staff make the decision to protect themselves and the youth under their care by getting vaccinated.

Ongoing restrictions at DJS facilities include the following:

- ☒ Youth who test positive for COVID-19 are placed in medical isolation and are required to stay inside their cell for 23 to 24 hours per day for up to two weeks. In addition to the fear and physical malaise (for symptomatic youth) that accompanies infection, isolation can lead to severe psychological distress. Moreover, a significant percentage of youth in DJS custody have histories of trauma and have been diagnosed with mental disorders which can make them more vulnerable to the harmful effects of prolonged isolation.

- ☒ New admission youth inside DJS facilities are required to spend two weeks on unit quarantine. During quarantine, movement is severely restricted and youth are required to eat, sleep, complete packets of school work related worksheets (in place of instruction), and to spend leisure time in their pod or residential unit. On some days, youth are permitted up to an hour either in the gym, outside on facility grounds or inside walled areas of facilities open to the sky. However, the granting of outdoor-based recreation is dependent on the presence of adequate staffing numbers and on the outside temperature being below 90 degrees.

- ☒ Mask mandates for youth and staff are still in force at DJS facilities. Youth not confined to their cell are required to wear masks anytime they leave their cells (which can mean up to 12 or more hours per day) including when entering a communal day room, attending classes, going to recreation, and while engaging in leisure time on a living unit.

- ☒ Youth across all DJS facilities cite lack of sufficient family contact as a significant hardship. At the height of the initial wave of the pandemic, young people incarcerated in DJS facilities were allocated an allowance of three free calls utilizing a for profit prison communications company (GTL)¹ that the State contracts with and pays to provide phone service to people in prisons and jails. Additionally youth were allowed three 15-20 minute calls (with a virtual call option for parents who opt-in) facilitated by DJS case managers. Administrators at DJS headquarters recently reduced the number of free phone calls home that youth are allowed to make through GTL from the three-call allowance that

¹ For more information on GTL, see <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2017/08/28/merger/> and <https://www.news5cleveland.com/news/state/phone-calls-to-youths-at-ohios-juvenile-correctional-facilities-now-free-5-cent-charge-eliminated>

incarcerated young people were allowed to make earlier in the pandemic. According to the administrators, the change was prompted by cost and the terms of the state contract with GTL. Youth now receive two 10-minute phone calls through the GTL phone system. The number of calls/virtual contact facilitated by case management was also reduced from three to two. Rather than reducing family contact for incarcerated young people as the disease variants continue to spread, DJS should – at a minimum – maintain and make permanent the allocation given earlier in the course of the current pandemic.

- ☒ Basic hygiene services such as haircuts and hair care services are only provided at most once per month. Youth at Backbone Mountain youth center went without haircuts for two months during the reporting period due to a lack of availability of barbers.

- ☒ Education services inside DJS facilities are provided by the Maryland State Department of Education Juvenile Services Education System (MSDE JSES). Instruction remained virtual (via Chromebook) during the second quarter of 2021 with teachers on-site two to three days per week to provide technical support. Many students continued to rely on DJS employees to provide consistent educational support (instructional as well as logistical) during the quarter. During periods of quarantine or medical isolation, youth at most facilities received packets to complete on their own due to limited internet access for Chromebook use outside of school areas. Administrators at MSDE JSES indicated that flash drives would be provided so that students in facility areas with poor connectivity could still partake in virtual education, however this initiative has not been widely instituted.

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)
- Garrett Children's Center (GCC)
- Mountain View
- Backbone Mountain and Green Ridge youth centers (two youth centers)
- Silver Oak Academy (SOA – DJS Licensed)

Incident and Population Trends

Second quarter 2021 population and incident trends versus second quarter of 2020:

- ✓ Average daily population (ADP) of young people decreased at all DJS-operated and licensed placement centers and at BCJJC, CYDC, Waxter, Noyes, and WMCC secure detention centers.
- ✓ Youth on youth fights and assaults decreased in secure detention at CYDC, Hickey, Noyes and WMCC and in committed placement at Cullen and the two youth centers.
- ✓ Physical restraints decreased in secure detention at CYDC, Hickey, Noyes and LESCC and at Cullen committed placement center.
- ✓ The use of mechanical restraints (handcuffs and/or leg irons) inside facilities decreased in secure detention at Noyes and in committed placement at Cullen. Mechanical restraints were not used inside CYDC and LESCC secure detention centers.
- ✓ The use of seclusion decreased in secure detention at CYDC, Waxter, and Noyes.
- Average daily population (ADP) of young people increased at Hickey and LESCC secure detention centers.
- Youth on youth fights increased in secure detention at BCJJC, Waxter, and LESCC and in committed placement at the DJS-licensed SOA.
- Physical restraints increased in secure detention at BCJJC, Hickey, and Waxter and WMCC and in committed placement at the two youth centers and SOA.
- Mechanical restraints usage inside facilities increased in secure detention at BCJJC, Waxter and WMCC and in committed placement at the two youth centers.
- Seclusions increased in secure detention at BCJJC and Hickey.
- There were 16 incidents involving suicide ideation and 7 incidents of self-injurious behavior at DJS-operated facilities during the second quarter of 2021.

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 or Black youth represented 43% of total entries during the second quarter of 2021 compared to 81% in the second quarter of 2020. Hispanic/Latino youth represented 14% of youth entries during the current reporting period compared to 10% during the same time in 2020.

Victor Cullen – Selected Incident Categories	Q2 2019	Q2 2020	Q2 2021
Average Daily Population (ADP)	22	15	14
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	22	10	3
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	5	4	2
3. Physical Restraint	41	39	16
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	18	20	11
5. Seclusion	5	11	4
6. Contraband	2	0	0
7. Suicide Ideation	1	0	1
8. Suicide Attempt	1	0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	1	0	0

Average daily population (ADP) at Victor Cullen decreased slightly (from 15 to 14) during the second quarter of 2021 compared to the second quarter of 2020, while the number of incidents involving youth on youth fights or assaults decreased by 70%, physical restraints of youth by staff decreased by 59%, use of mechanical restraints (handcuffs and/or leg irons) on youth by staff inside the facility decreased by 45%, and instances of seclusion decreased by approximately 64%

Program

Therapeutic and education related services are poor at Victor Cullen and career and technology related offerings are almost non-existent. Activities available to youth, while never plentiful, have been further limited by the ongoing pandemic. The young people incarcerated at Cullen languish as they try to get through the time they must spend there, while many could benefit from a functional, holistic treatment program.

Recruitment and retention of direct-care and professional staff remains an ongoing issue at Cullen. A small cadre of direct-care workers have been working extended overtime to make up for the lack of staffing (due to call-outs and vacancies) during shifts. Front-line workers report experiencing burnout which can negatively affect safety and security and the quality of care provided to young people. Case management is also facing a shortage as a previously employed case manager supervisor as well as a unit case manager no longer work at the facility.

The staffing crisis extends to mental health clinicians. There is no mental health worker supervisor onsite fulltime at Victor Cullen – there is one recently arrived therapist working fulltime onsite and another clinician has been out on leave for some time. The Department needs to ensure there is a full complement of dedicated clinicians at Cullen, a fenced facility that serves as a last stop for some youth in the deepest end of the Maryland juvenile justice system.

During a monitoring visit, two youth who are high school graduates were observed painting a pavilion and doing landscaping work at Cullen. The Department needs to explore how to offer opportunities for youth from Victor Cullen (and other DJS placements) to work, intern or study in nearby communities. The two youth seen working were doing so in exchange for food brought from outside the facility. Off grounds paid work would help incarcerated young people learn valuable life skills in more normalized environments – time outside the facility would also help with community re-entry transitions and mitigate against recidivism. Money earned from employment could be used for restitution and to help youth financially when they leave the facility.

Education

The Maryland State Department of Education, Juvenile Services Education System (MSDE JSES) operates the school at Victor Cullen. Instruction remained virtual (via Chromebooks) during the second quarter of 2021, so youth had no in-person instruction. Some teachers were on site to assist with technical issues. Students on medical quarantine received packets of worksheets to complete and did not have access to Chromebooks due to internet connectivity issues in parts of the facility. MSDE should follow up on plans to provide flash drives for Chromebooks so that students can work on course work regardless of where they are located in a facility.

The school at Cullen shares a principal with Western Maryland Children's Center (WMCC), a hardware secure detention center located in Washington County, Maryland.

Students attending the school at Victor Cullen and students at WMCC independently need and deserve to have a full-time on-site principal to lead and oversee school operations at each location.

The newly assigned principal at Victor Cullen (and WMCC) should prioritize the creation of a positive and supportive school climate that promotes student success. In the past, students at Cullen have voiced to monitors on several occasions that they do not feel welcomed by education staff and that teachers and education administrators are overly punitive.

For example, many students at Victor Cullen were barred from using Chromebooks for various periods of time during the second quarter. Administrators at MSDE JSES cited “safety and security concerns” as the reasons for confiscating the Chromebooks. Rather than increasing supervision and providing more frequent and consistent in-person education support for students as they engaged in virtual education, the students concerned were given packets of education-related worksheets to complete. According to a statement from MSDE education administrators:

Of the 15 students that enrolled at Cullen during [the second quarter], ten students violated the [Chromebook use] policy, four of which had no repeat occurrences. The remaining students violated the policy on more than one occasion... One student did receive printed materials at various times for a total of 23 days during the months of April-June. He violated the computer use policy on at least 5 occasions during this period.

At time of writing (July 2021), in-person instruction has resumed at Victor Cullen.

Vacancies for a math and special education teacher should be filled without delay to minimize disruptions in instruction.

For more information on education in DJS facilities, see the MSDE JSES section of this report which begins on page 41.

Garrett Children's Center

The Garrett Children's Center (GCC) facility, located in Alleghany 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. There were no youth placed at GCC during the second quarter of 2021.

GCC	Q2 2019	Q2 2020	Q2 2021
Average Daily Population (ADP)	7	4	N/A
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	2	6	N/A
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	2	0	N/A
3. Physical Restraint	21	6	N/A
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	8	2	N/A
5. Seclusion	0	1	N/A
6. Contraband	0	4	N/A
7. Suicide Ideation	3	0	N/A
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	N/A
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	0	0	N/A

For information on education in DJS facilities, see the MSDE JSES section of this report which begins on page 41.

Youth Centers x2

The youth centers, located in remote western Maryland, consist of Green Ridge and Backbone Mountain, two separate staff secure (not fenced and locked) facilities for boys. Each of these centers is owned and operated by the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS/the Department). African American or Black youth represented 76% of total youth center entries in the first quarter of 2021 compared to 78% during the same time period in 2020.

Combined Youth Centers (x2) – Selected Incident Categories	Q2 2019	Q2 2020	Q2 2021
Average Daily Population (ADP)	88	33	25
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	51	2	7
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	3	4	4
3. Physical Restraint	98	42	57
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	11	14	15
5. Seclusion	0	0	0
6. Contraband	7	2	3
7. Suicide Ideation	8	1	1
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	1	0	0

Average daily population (ADP) at the youth centers decreased by 24% during the second quarter of 2021 compared to the second quarter of 2020. Despite the reduction in population, youth fights and assaults, physical restraints of youth by staff, and use of mechanical restraints (handcuffs and/or leg irons) on youth by staff inside the youth centers increased when compared with the same time period last year.

There were no reported incidents of seclusion at the youth centers during the second quarter of 2021. However, administrators at Backbone Mountain placed a youth in isolation in a large dayroom for over 11 days because of conflict between this youth and other youth in his group. The isolated youth slept, ate meals, and completed school packets in the dayroom. The dayroom was not equipped with internet access and he did not have access to a computer. Therefore the youth could not attend virtual classes providing synchronous instruction as he had been allowed to do while in school.

Instead of punitive, corrections-oriented measures such as placing youth in isolation in response to group conflict, administrators at Backbone should utilize restorative justice practices and processes within their program to help youth and staff manage interpersonal issues constructively.

Although the youth centers are not locked and fenced institutions, they do not offer what many other such facilities do, including robust and varied career and technical education. There are also few off-campus recreational or educational outings for the young people at the centers and there are even fewer opportunities for positive engagement with local surrounding communities (such as volunteer work). Additionally, there are no opportunities whatsoever for youth to work or even intern with local employers or organizations.

Meaningful (and plentiful) opportunities for positive engagement, including community outings, volunteer opportunities, recreational activities (both on an off-campus), and robust career and vocational programs (including jobs and internships) could (if they were offered) also help curb conflict by:

- 1) reducing the amount of time youth spent together in small quarters with little to keep them occupied (which can lead to boredom and tension) and
- 2) providing youth with worthwhile incentives to maintain pro-social behavior while learning important life skills.

For information on education services in DJS facilities, see page 41.

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.

SOA – Selected Incident Categories	Q2 2019	Q2 2020	Q2 2021
Average Daily Population (ADP)	40	25	15²
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	15	6	9
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	1	0	1
3. Physical Restraint	31	6	9
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	0	0	0
5. Seclusion	0	0	0
6. Contraband	0	2	1
7. Suicide Ideation	0	0	0
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	0	0	0

The average daily population of youth placed at Silver Oak decreased by 40% in the second quarter of 2021 when compared to the second quarter of 2020. During the same time period both youth fights and assaults and incidents involving physical restraints of youth by staff increased by 50%.

² ADP reflects the average number of residential youth placed at Silver Oak through DJS and out-of-state jurisdictions. Silver Oak also operates a day school, however those students are currently separated from residential students.

Issues with staff supervision and staff adherence to key and lock control protocols at Silver Oak should be addressed through refresher training and staff accountability measures. In Incident 167571, youth were riding bikes on campus in a designated area when three youth broke from the group without staff detection and pedaled across campus to a living unit not in use. The doors to the living unit should have been locked, however the kids went inside the building and accessed a phone which was located in an office (which should also have been locked). The kids placed two prank 911 calls within fifteen minutes of each other and told the dispatcher that there were kids with guns riding around on bikes on campus. Police responded to the facility and eventually discovered that the boys were responsible for the calls.

Youth placed at Silver Oak have far fewer opportunities for family contact than those held at DJS facilities. Youth at Silver Oak receive two 15-minute phone calls twice per week and one virtual call (and if parents are available and able to travel, one in-person visit per month). Silver Oak should increase family contact for youth. Juvenile justice experts have noted that “in-person visits and other methods of social support, such as phone calls and letter writing, play an important role in minimizing the stress and isolation attributed to system involvement” and that “maintaining family relationships during incarceration appears to help buffer youths against depression and other mental health, behavioral, and academic issues while confined. Such relationships also offer youths motivation and material and emotional support...”³

Efforts to hire an additional case manager and on-site mental health clinician to accommodate the needs of residential and day students should be prioritized.

³ Development Services Group, Inc. 2018. “Family Engagement in Juvenile Justice.” Literature review. Page 8. Washington, D.C.: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Available at: <https://www.ojjdp.gov/mpg/litreviews/FamilyEngagement-in-Juvenile-Justice.pdf>

Mountain View

Mountain View is a staff secure committed placement center for girls that opened in June of 2020. The facility is located in remote western Maryland and consists of a single structure comprised of a living unit (upstairs) and school (downstairs) on the grounds of the Backbone Mountain Youth Center for boys. The dormitory style living unit houses up to six girls. Mountain View is owned and operated by the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS/the Department). African American/Black girls and Hispanic/Latina girls represented 43% and 14% respectively of the total number of youth entries during the second quarter of 2021.

Mountain View – Selected Incident Categories	Q2 2019	Q2 2020	Q2 2021
Average Daily Population (ADP)			4
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight			2
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault			0
3. Physical Restraint			3
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles			1
5. Seclusion			0
6. Contraband			0
7. Suicide Ideation			1
8. Suicide Attempt			0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior			0

The average daily population of youth at Mountain View during the second quarter of 2021 was four girls. During the current reporting period, there were two youth on youth assaults,

three physical restraints of youth by staff, and one use of mechanical restraints (handcuffs and/or leg irons) placed on a girl by staff inside at the facility.

An administration building which houses case management and behavioral health offices has been completed but is not equipped with telephone service or cameras. Youth continue to lack privacy for therapy sessions and phone calls home as therapy and phone calls both take place on the porch or inside the facility where there are no individual offices. In addition, the facility case manager is not on site most evenings and weekends. Direct-care staff are often charged with providing youth with phone calls due to the case manager's limited schedule. Some additional evening and weekend hours should be built into the case manager's schedule to enable the fulfillment of the duties of the position.

Girls requested more time to talk to loved ones beyond the allotted 50-60 minutes (broken up into 10-20 minute increments) of phone calls they receive per week. Phone and virtual contact is especially important at Mountain View as the facility is remotely located and difficult for parents/guardians or other family members to access for in-person visits.

Communication between administrators/upper management and front-line staff remains poor and therapeutic and rapport building skills among some management personnel should be improved. During a monitoring check-in during the quarter, a girl described (to a monitor) an event which upset her. The girl reported that she completed an art project which included a picture of cannabis leaves. Staff told her this was unacceptable and had to be changed. The girl used post it notes to cover up the picture. An upper-level manager confiscated the art later when the youth was not present and without informing her or processing with her about the decision. A staff member then returned the artwork to the girl. The superintendent of the facility confiscated the item a second time and told the girl that the staff should not have returned it to her. Again, there was no dialogue with the girl about the rationale for confiscating the art or about what she could have done to remedy the situation, or any explanation of the ways she could continue to utilize art to express herself in a socially acceptable manner in the future.

Administrators and staff at other facilities – the Waxter detention center for girls, the Western Maryland Children's (detention) Center for boys, and the Victor Cullen placement center for boys - have all adopted certified therapy dogs provided through DJS. The puppy at Waxter is available to visit with girls at that facility on an everyday basis and frequently throughout each day. The dog therapy program is popular and well-liked by youth at every DJS facility which has such a program. Mountain View should bolster its program offerings by providing access to dog therapy onsite.

For information on education services in DJS facilities, see page 41.

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 or Black youth represented 86% of total youth entries during the second quarter of 2021, compared to 89% during the same time period in 2020.

BCJJC – Selected Incident Categories	Q2 2019	Q2 2020	Q2 2021
Average Daily Population (ADP)	68	44	35
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	48	30	33
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	9	6	4
3. Physical Restraint	74	35	45
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	17	9	12
5. Seclusion	13	3	16
6. Contraband	7	3	0
7. Suicide Ideation	4	1	2
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	1	2	1

Average daily population (ADP) at BCJJC during the second quarter of 2021 decreased by approximately 20% when compared to the same time last year. However, youth on youth fights and assaults increased by approximately 10%, instances of physical restraints of youth by staff increased by 29%, and the use of mechanical restraints (handcuffs and/or shackles) on youth inside the detention facility increased by 33%. Additionally, the number of times seclusion was used during the reporting period also substantially increased when compared to the second

quarter of 2020 (from three instances in the second quarter of 2020 to 16 instances in the second quarter of 2021).

While in-person family visitation has resumed at DJS facilities, the number of allocated free phone calls home has been reduced by administrators at DJS headquarters. The reasons given are connected to the cost to the State and contract stipulations with the for profit prison communications company (GTL) that provides phone service to youth.⁴ Youth received three 10-minute phone calls through the GTL phone system during the height of the first wave of the pandemic as well as three 15-20 minute calls (with a virtual option for parents who can opt-in) facilitated by DJS case managers. The GTL call allowance has been cut from three calls to two and calls facilitated by case management have also been cut from three calls to two calls – all this even as Covid-19 variants play havoc with plans to regain normalcy throughout the country. Additionally, several youth reported that other youth stole their personal access code to the GTL system and they were subsequently denied their minimal phone allocation allowance for the week as a result. The Department should permanently increase the allotment of phone calls home that youth receive and administrators at BCJJC should work to prevent theft of youth phone codes within the facility.

A new outside recreation area has been designated within the facility to provide youth with more options during recreation. Efforts should be made to ensure that youth on quarantine have access to sessions of outside recreation while they wait to be medically cleared to join the general population.

Youth access to barbering services is sporadic and inconsistent. Youth at BCJJC were not included on the DJS barbering schedule as observed during a monitoring visit during the reporting period. The Department should provide more frequent and comprehensive barbering services for the young people incarcerated in DJS facilities as COVID-19 restrictions continue to ease.

The Maryland State Department of Education, Juvenile Services Education System (MSDE JSES) operates the school at BCJJC. Education remained virtual for the second quarter of 2021, so youth had no in-person instruction. Additionally, the Chromebooks utilized for virtual instruction were not given to newly arrived students (they must complete a two week quarantine period prior to entering the general population) nor to youth on medical isolation due to limited internet connectivity in some parts of the facility. The affected students were provided packets to complete on their own. Administrators at MSDE indicated that flash drives would be provided so that students in facility areas with poor connectivity could still partake in virtual education, however this approach does not seem to have been widely instituted.

For more information on education in DJS facilities, see page 41.

⁴ For more information on GTL, see <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2017/08/28/merger/> and <https://www.news5cleveland.com/news/state/phone-calls-to-youths-at-ohios-juvenile-correctional-facilities-now-free-5-cent-charge-eliminated>

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 or Black youth represented 71% of total youth entries in the second quarter of 2021 versus 74% during the same period in 2020. Hispanic/Latino youth represented 18% of entries during the second quarter of 2021, up by 1% when compared with the same period last year.

CYDC– Selected Incident Categories	Q2 2019	Q2 2020	Q2 2021
Average Daily Population (ADP)	53	37	28
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	27	27	13
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	4	2	1
3. Physical Restraint	38	38	29
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	1	0	0
5. Seclusion	2	6	5
6. Contraband	3	4	1
7. Suicide Ideation	2	1	2
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	1
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	2	1	4

Average daily population in the second quarter of 2021 decreased by 24% when compared to the second quarter of 2020. The number of youth fights and assaults; the frequency of physical restraints of youth by staff; and the number of reported instances of seclusion also decreased. There were no incidents involving the use of mechanical restraints (handcuffs and/or leg irons) on youth inside the facility during the second quarter of this year.

De-escalation and emotional regulation skills for staff should be emphasized during employee training to help prevent physical altercations between staff and youth. In Incident 167130, a supervisor tried to keep a staffer separated from a youth in the classroom after the staffer was cursing at the youth and escalating tension between the staffer and the youth. After the youth threw a pen at the staffer, the staffer got past the supervisor, lunged toward the youth, and began tussling with him. Four of the youth's peers entered the fracas in an attempt to defend the youth from the staffer. Staff assistance arrived and restrained both the youth and the staffer to break up the melee.

In Incident 167264, a staffer initiated horseplay with a youth which caused the youth to become escalated. A second staffer had to intervene to separate the youth and the staffer.

Following both of the incidents described above, youth were placed in seclusion, however the seclusions were not authorized by the appropriate officials, mandated paperwork was not completed, and regular check-ins in 10 minute intervals for youth on seclusion was not documented in accordance with DJS seclusion policy.⁵ All staff at Cheltenham should receive refresher training on DJS seclusion protocols and procedures.

The Maryland State Department of Education, Juvenile Services Education System (MSDE JSES) operates the school at CYDC. Instruction remained virtual (via Chromebooks) for the second quarter of 2021 so youth had no in-person instruction. Some teachers were on site two to three days a week (not to instruct but) to assist with technical issues.

Additionally, due to limited internet connectivity in some parts of the facility, the Chromebooks utilized for virtual instruction were not given to newly arrived students - who must complete a two week quarantine prior to entering the general population - or to youth on medical isolation. The affected students were provided packets of worksheets to complete on their own. Administrators at MSDE commented at a public meeting that flash drives would be supplied for use with the Chromebooks so that students in facility areas with poor connectivity could partake in virtual education, however this initiative has not been widely instituted.

Virtual education has been a struggle for many students, including those with special education needs and ELL students (English-language learners) who have had to rely on DJS direct-care workers and other non-education professionals for assistance with their work. DJS workers, unlike education staff, were required to be at facilities during regular working hours and throughout each week during the pandemic. In Grievance 16946, a youth who spoke only Spanish requested a specific interpreter who worked with him in the past and who is proactive about assisting students with school work. As the student stated in a grievance he wrote, "the

⁵ DJS Seclusion Policy RF 720-18

interpreter helps me with my school work and translates and explains what to do” (Grievance 16946).

For more information on education in DJS facilities, see page 41.

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 or Black youth accounted for 70% of entries in the second quarter of 2021, compared to 82% during the second quarter of 2020. Hispanic/Latino youth represented 12% of youth entries during the reporting period.

Hickey – Selected Incident Categories	Q2 2019	Q2 2020	Q2 2021
Average Daily Population (ADP)	52	36	41
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	28	31	27
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	0	0	2
3. Physical Restraint	35	28	19
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	4	0	1
5. Seclusion	3	2	3
6. Contraband	5	3	3
7. Suicide Ideation	0	0	1
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	0	0	4

Average daily population (ADP) in the second quarter of 2021 increased by approximately 14% compared to the second quarter of 2020. Comparing the same two time periods, fights amongst youth, physical restraints of youth by staff and the number of incidents involving seclusion of youth all decreased. Mechanical restraints (handcuffs and/or leg irons) were used once on youth within the facility during the second quarter of 2021.

Efforts should be made to provide more individualized and comprehensive mental health care for youth. During the quarter, mental health staff used the same boiler plate language to create guarded care plans (which are supposed to be individualized to each student's treatment needs) for multiple youth. Mental health staff should ensure treatment documents are tailored to each youth's individual needs. Coverage for mental health services should extend to include the addition of an on-site mental health clinician at the school to assist with youth who need clinical services during the school day. Currently youth who exhibit behavioral issues at school are removed from school and sent back to their residential unit. An on-site school-based therapist can help stabilize agitated youth so that they can return to the classroom, and such an approach should result in less disruption to students' academic progress.

While in-person family visitation has resumed at DJS facilities, the number of allocated free phone calls home has been reduced by administrators at DJS headquarters. The reasons given are connected to the cost to the State and contract stipulations with the for profit prison communications company (GTL) that provides phone service to youth.⁶ Youth received three 10-minute calls through the GTL phone system during the height of the first wave of the pandemic as well as three 15-20 minute calls (with a virtual option for parents who can opt-in) with their facility case managers. The GTL call allowance has been cut from three calls to two and calls facilitated by case management have also been cut from three calls to two calls – all this even as Covid-19 variants play havoc with plans to regain normalcy throughout the country.

Additionally, Hickey has a shortage of case managers due both to unfilled vacancies and staff on leave, and the situation affects youth access to even the newly limited number of allowed phone calls with their families. The shortage also negatively impacts the provision of other case management services. Further complicating an already fraught situation, several youth have reported that other youth stole their personal access code to the GTL call services and the complainants were subsequently denied their ration of phone calls for the week in question as a result. These issues are slow to be resolved.

In addition to limited phone contact, the support system that youth can access through in-person visitation and calls is severely restricted and only includes immediate family members. Some students during the quarter requested to update their telephone list to include supportive family members that they live with or usually talk to regularly. One youth was denied the right to update his telephone list – he wanted to remove his step-father from the list and instead add his aunt and uncle. The youth reported that he lived with this aunt and uncle.

COVID-19 protocols have disrupted regular access to basic hygiene services such as haircuts. At best, youth have access to barbering services once per month, however the schedule is inconsistent and youth report that their time with the barber is rushed and the quality

⁶ For more information on GTL, see <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2017/08/28/merger/> and <https://www.news5cleveland.com/news/state/phone-calls-to-youths-at-ohios-juvenile-correctional-facilities-now-free-5-cent-charge-eliminated>

of the haircuts is poor as the service is dependent on a sole individual who is responsible for servicing the entire facility youth population. The Department should be able to arrange for more frequent and comprehensive barbering services, especially when COVID-19 restrictions ease.

The Maryland State Department of Education, Juvenile Services Education System (MSDE JSES) operates the school at Hickey. Education remained virtual for the second quarter of 2021. Chromebook access for virtual instruction was not available to new students (who must complete a two week quarantine prior to entering general population) and to youth on medical isolation due to limited internet connectivity in some parts of the facility. These students are provided packets to complete on their own. Administrators at MSDE indicated that flash drives would be provided so that students in facility areas with poor connectivity could still partake in virtual education, however this approach does not seem to have been widely instituted.

Students requested more access to the school library. The library is only accessible to students every other week. Library hours should be expanded to accommodate youth need.

For more information on education in DJS facilities, see page 41.

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 or Black youth represented 79% of entries during the second quarter of 2021 compared to 48% in the second quarter of 2020. Hispanic/Latina youth represented 6% of youth entries during the second quarter of 2021 compared to 8% during the second quarter of 2020.

The physical plant at Waxter is aged and in disrepair. An outdated HVAC system results in extreme temperature fluctuations throughout the facility. Repairs and attempts to replace parts for the system have been ongoing but have been delayed by difficulties finding parts for the outdated apparatus.

Waxter – Selected Incident Categories	Q2 2019	Q2 2020	Q2 2021
Average Daily Population (ADP)	22	17	12
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	12	3	4
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	4	6	4
3. Physical Restraint	45	18	31
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	4	5	13
5. Seclusion	4	8	3
6. Contraband	2	2	0
7. Suicide Ideation	15	2	5
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	0	0	2

The average daily population (ADP) at Waxter decreased by 29% in the second quarter of 2021 compared to the second quarter of 2020. During the same time period, physical restraints of youth by staff increased by 72% and the number of incidents involving utilization of mechanical restraints (handcuffs and/or shackles) by staff inside the facility more than doubled. There were three instances where seclusion was used during the quarter compared to eight instances of seclusion during the second quarter of 2020.

A girl housed at Waxter with severe trauma and mental health issues during the quarter struggled psychologically and behaviorally while in a detention environment. The majority of incidents involving staff use of restraints and seclusions during the quarter (some of which are highlighted below) occurred in response to their attempts to attend to the very ill child.

Incident 167265: The girl repeatedly slammed her cell door against the wall and charged after another youth. She was restrained and placed in her cell. She placed her mattress against the cell window to prevent staff from looking in after being placed in her cell. Staff forced their way into the cell to remove the mattress.

Incident 167269: She did not comply with staff directives. She destroyed items in the bathroom and tried to injure herself with torn pieces of cardboard. She was placed on seclusion. She threatened to kill herself and tied a sock around her neck and attempted to cover her mouth with a cloth after being placed in seclusion. She was mechanically restrained and locked in her cell for 55 minutes.

Incident 167304: The girl was in crisis and refused directives to walk to her room to de-escalate. She had in her hand colored pencils and verbally stated that she would stab and kill staff. She used the pencils to harm herself and was physically and mechanically restrained. As she was being restrained by male staff, she yelled, "you are supposed to be my dad, why are you raping me!" while banging her head against the floor. She was placed in mechanical restraints for an hour.

Incident 167306: She was in crisis due to her court date being postponed. She began scratching her hand with a playing card and stated that she wanted to hurt herself. She swallowed a toothpaste cap and became unresponsive and then spit the cap out. She entered the bathroom and began trying to break the sink faucet. Youth was restrained and placed in her room.

Incident 167335: Another youth was verbally antagonizing the girl and she in response attempted to assault the youth. She was physically restrained and placed in mechanical restraints for an hour.

Incident 167374: Youth was given a verbal prompt to stop threatening staff and a warning from staff when she did not comply. After continued non-compliance, staff attempted to escort

the youth to her room for a personal restriction.⁷ She became further escalated and refused to interact with mental health staff when they were called to the scene. She was physically restrained and then placed in mechanical restraints for an hour and fifteen minutes (after which the manacles were removed) and placed on seclusion (where she remained for the rest of the day).

Incident 167380: While on seclusion following the just described incident (Incident 167374), the girl tied her uniform shirt around her neck. Staff entered and used a cut down tool to remove the shirt from the child's neck. Staff re-handcuffed the youth and she remained in handcuffs for an hour while still being secluded.

Incident 167383: Staff entered her cell to remove the handcuffs placed on the girl (in Incident 167380 – see above). She became upset and placed herself in front of the cell door and refused to move. She was given verbal directives and a warning to remove herself from the cell door area. She pushed back on staff attempting to close her cell door and ran into the bathroom. She was physically restrained and put back in her cell.

Incident 167379: Youth remained in her cell for much of the day. After exhibiting prolonged “unsafe, aggressive, and bizarre behavior” (according to case management notes) and experiencing psychotic symptoms such as visual hallucinations, youth was referred for emergency psychiatric evaluation. Staff entered the girl's cell and placed handcuffs and leg-irons on her before transporting her to the hospital. She remained agitated and hostile.

Incident 167388: (Following her return to Waxter detention center after a brief hospital stay). A staffer took a pen away from the girl after she indicated that she would use it to harm herself. She became agitated and staff assistance was called. Multiple staffers physically restrained her.

Incident 167390: Youth barricaded herself in her cell by holding her cell door closed and also placed her pants over the cell window so that staff could not see inside the cell. Staff forced their way in to the cell and the girl came out of her cell and approached a staffer in an aggressive fashion. Staff assistance was called and multiple staff physically restrained the girl and placed her in her cell. She was mechanically restrained and held in seclusion for over two hours.

Incident 167434: The girl smacked a staffer on the side of her neck and the staffer restrained the girl and told her to stop touching people before releasing her from the restraint. The youth tried to hug the staffer. The staffer left the area and returned and the youth approached the staffer and asked why the staffer was in such a bad mood. The staffer responded that she wasn't in a bad mood but did not like people touching her. The youth became agitated and the staff requested to be assigned to another unit for the day and left the unit.

⁷ The behavior modification system in DJS detention facilities trains staff to issue directives (commands or orders) to youth to follow program rules. Youth who do not comply are given prompts to modify their behavior and then warnings if they continue to be non-compliant. As a consequence for continued non-compliance, youth are placed in “personal restriction” (time in their cell with the door unlocked).

Incident 167435: Staff issued prompts and warnings for the girl to lock into her cell for the evening. She was agitated and a staff person brought her to a dayroom to process and de-escalate. The girl began throwing books at staff and threatening them with a plastic spork.

Incident 167498: At nighttime, the girl became upset when she wasn't allowed to walk around the dayroom instead of being escorted back and locked into her cell after using the bathroom. She threw books at staff and grabbed a staffer's radio. The girl was physically and mechanically restrained. She stayed in mechanical restraints for 40 minutes.

Incident 167487: The girl became agitated before lock-in time in the evening. She assaulted staff and threw books and other items at staff. Assistance was called after failed attempts to restrain the youth. The youth was able to be de-escalated by staff.

Incident 167513: The girl was in crisis and flipped over a trash can, placed the trash bag over her head, flipped tables and chairs over, and punched a staffer. She was physically and mechanically restrained and placed in her cell. The girl remained in mechanical restraints for over an hour and a half.

Incident 167547: The girl was in crisis and again flipped over a trash can and also swung a yellow cleaning sign around in the air. Staff assistance was called and multiple staff physically restrained the girl. She was placed in her cell and mechanically restrained. The girl remained in mechanical restraints for roughly two hours.

Incident 167541: The girl became agitated after being directed to put pants on over her thermal underwear. She threatened to kill herself. The girl assaulted staff who tried to retrieve a sweater from her after she draped it over a bathroom stall in a potential effort to hang herself. According to case management notes, she threatened to throw feces on staff and swallowed a black object that she picked up from the floor. She subsequently spat out the object. Staff were able to de-escalate the girl and bring her to her room.

Incident 167603: The girl wanted to use a bathroom that was being used by another girl. When she was denied entry, she went into a supply closet (which was unlocked) and began taking and throwing objects at staff. Staff assistance was called but delayed due to a staff shortage. The girl was subsequently physically and mechanically restrained. She remained in mechanical restraints for over one hour.

Incident 167667: The girl was brought to court for a forensic examination. Afterwards, when she was being escorted to the transportation van which was to take her back to the Waxter detention center, she became very agitated and yelled, "Help! Call the police!" She refused to get into the van and said, "I am not going back to Waxter. I'm going home. My aunt lives around here."

Incident 167682: The girl was upset about having to lock into her cell for the evening. Multiple staff attempted to physically restrain the girl after she went into the unit dayroom and started throwing items at staff. She managed to run into a bathroom and tried to hang herself with a towel. She then hopped in a shower stall and turned the shower on while fully dressed. Staff were able to place her in her cell.

Incident 167684: The girl entered a bathroom area and looped a ripped bra on the top of a toilet stall and attempted to place her neck inside the loop. She was physically restrained and placed in her cell.

To sum up, as the just described and sadly numerous incidents involving just one child illustrate, detention is a particularly inappropriate setting for any youth with significant mental health challenges and research also indicates that incarceration often worsens mental health conditions.⁸

Direct care staff at DJS detention and placement facilities do not receive specialized training in preventing, managing and treating severely agitated youth who may be prone to experiencing mental health crises due to their underlying psychiatric conditions. Detention centers lack specialized resources and the particular professional clinical expertise necessary to address the needs of this population. The emphasis on compliance in correctional settings and a reliance on maintaining control through use of verbal commands (directives), physical and mechanical restraints and isolation (seclusion) to enforce compliance can be ineffective and re-traumatizing for many youth and can lead to both staff and youth physical and psychological injury. Furthermore, supportive services for staff to help process symptoms of vicarious trauma and cope with the physical and mental toll of working with children with severe emotional disturbance are lacking in the juvenile justice system.

The Maryland juvenile justice system cannot become a default component of the State mental health system. The State needs to address the current severe shortages affecting in-patient psychiatric facilities in Maryland which are causing delays in performing professional team evaluations of youth in crisis and delays in facilitating appropriate placements for young people assessed as in need of behavioral and mental health services. The state should also examine whether young people referred for such services but dependent upon Medicaid to cover their treatment are being pushed to the back of the queue in favor of those who can use other means to cover the costs of such crucial services.

Rather than dumping youth with complex mental health problems in juvenile detention, courts, child-serving agencies, child advocates, and other relevant stakeholders and concerned individuals in Maryland should work together to increase capacity to serve mentally ill children

⁸ A Roadmap to the Ideal Juvenile Justice System (July 2019), by Tim Decker (on behalf of the Juvenile Justice Leadership Network), p. 13, available at: <https://cjjr.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/A-Roadmap-to-the-Ideal-Juvenile-Justice-System-Digital-Release.pdf> ; Justice Policy Institute, The Dangers of Detention: The Impact of Incarcerating Youth in Detention and Other Secure Facilities, (2011), p. 8., available at: http://www.justicepolicy.org/images/upload/06-11_rep_dangersofdetention_jj.pdf

in their homes and communities and, when needed, in specialized health care settings that can address and – one hopes- successfully treat their underlying conditions.

The Maryland State Department of Education, Juvenile Services Education System (MSDE JSES) is responsible for education services in DJS facilities. Due to an outbreak of COVID-19 in which seven girls tested positive for the virus, neither in-person or virtual school services were available at Waxter for over two weeks during the reporting period. Students were given packets of worksheets to complete on their own even as administrators at MSDE indicated that Chromebooks with flash drives would be provided so that students (even in DJS facility areas with poor connectivity) could still partake in virtual education. This initiative has yet to be widely instituted.

For more information on education in DJS facilities, see page 41.

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 29 youths. African American or Black youth represented 83% of entries in the second quarter of 2021 compared to 50% during the same period in 2020. Hispanic/Latinx youth accounted for 12% of entries during the second quarter of 2021 versus 35% during the same period in 2020.

Noyes – Selected Incident Categories	Q2 2019	Q2 2020	Q2 2021
Average Daily Population (ADP)	31	16	10
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	16	6	5
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	3	1	2
3. Physical Restraint	55	33	8
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	10	21	2
5. Seclusion	1	3	2
6. Contraband	3	3	1
7. Suicide Ideation	3	4	0
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	1	13	0

Average daily population decreased by 38% during the second quarter of 2021 compared to the same time last year. Comparing the same time periods, physical restraints of youth by staff as well as instances where mechanical restraints (handcuffs and/or leg irons) were used on youth by staff within the facility decreased substantially. Seclusion was used twice during the current reporting period.

Food services are provided by a private vendor at Noyes. For years, youth have filed grievances about the quality and quantity of food served, yet the situation (and the vendor) remains unchanged. During the quarter, youth complained during monitoring visits of being served rancid juice on several occasions. Youth on one unit threw away an entire meal because it was inedible and chose to go hungry (Grievance 16961). As a DJS child advocate commented,

The youth have always been advised that they will most likely not receive meals that are comparable to [what] they are used to, but youth need to at least be able to eat the food. Youth in detention know they do not have the option of fast food or take out [food] at will. They know when their next meals are scheduled and how much they are going to get with nothing in between. Youth who are hungry despite knowing their food situation is unsettling and unstable. Youth who are hungry are less cooperative, more combative and easily agitated. This creates an unnecessary unsafe environment. The whole unit discarding a meal under the aforementioned conditions is not good (Grievance 16961).

The Department must contract with a different food vendor for youth at the Noyes facility that is capable of providing the young people incarcerated there with tasty and nourishing meals.

The Maryland State Department of Education, Juvenile Services Education System (MSDE JSES) is responsible for education services in DJS facilities. Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) have provided additional resources for the school at Noyes under an agreement with MSDE JSES that runs through December 2021. Leadership at MSDE JSES should continue to ensure that supports and services provided through MCPS to the school at Noyes remain in place throughout the approaching new academic year.

For more information on education in DJS facilities, see page 41.

Lower Eastern Shore Children’s Center

The Lower Eastern Shore Children’s Center (LESCC) is a hardware secure (locked and fenced) 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 or Black youth represented 69% of entries during the second quarter of 2021 compared to 81% in the second quarter of 2020.

LESCC – Selected Incident Categories	Q2 2019	Q2 2020	Q2 2021
Average Daily Population (ADP)	18	8	15
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	6	6	10
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	0	0	1
3. Physical Restraint	14	14	11
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	1	0	0
5. Seclusion	0	0	0
6. Contraband	0	1	0
7. Suicide Ideation	4	5	0
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	2	0	0

The average daily population at LESCC increased by approximately 86% in the second quarter of 2021 when compared to the second quarter of 2020. Youth on youth fights increased by 66%, while physical restraints of youth by staff decreased by 21% during the quarter compared to the same time last year. Neither seclusion nor mechanical restraints (handcuffs and/or leg irons) were used inside the facility during the second quarters of both 2021 and 2020.

Youth on the quarantine unit at LESCC during the second quarter reported that they were not able to get virtual phone calls. LESCC should make arrangements to ensure that youth in quarantine receive access to family contact at a level comparable to what youth in the general population receive.

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 page 41.

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 which is owned and operated by the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS/the Department). African American or Black youth represented 62% of total entries during the second quarter of 2021 compared to 42% in the second quarter of 2020. Latino/Hispanic youth accounted for 10% of total entries during the current reporting period, an increase of 2% compared to the second quarter of 2020.

WMCC – Selected Incident Categories	Q2 2019	Q2 2020	Q2 2021
Average Daily Population (ADP)	18	16	12
1. Youth on Youth Assault/Fight	16	9	5
2. Alleged Youth on Staff Assault	1	0	0
3. Physical Restraint	31	13	13
4. Use of Handcuffs and/or Shackles	8	0	4
5. Seclusion	2	0	0
6. Contraband	3	3	1
7. Suicide Ideation	0	1	4
8. Suicide Attempt	0	0	0
9. Self-Injurious Behavior	0	0	0

The average daily population decreased by 25% in the second quarter of 2021 compared to the same time last year. The number of incidents involving youth fights decreased by 44% while physical restraints of youth by staff remained at the same level. There were four instances where youth were placed in handcuffs and/or leg irons while inside the facility (versus zero instances of mechanical restraint usage in the second quarter of 2020).

Staffing issues at WMCC including call-outs, vacancies and staff on leave have driven excessive overtime usage. Upper management staff have had to pinch hit in order to ensure direct-care coverage at times during the quarter due to the staffing shortages. In addition to direct-care positions, there has been a long-time vacancy for a recreation specialist, and the case manager supervisor was out on extended medical leave. Case managers from another facility covered her duties during her absence.

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

The school at WMCC shares a principal with the Victor Cullen Center, a hardware secure placement center located in Frederick County, Maryland. WMCC is the only detention center which does not have a full-time on-site principal. Students attending the school at Victor Cullen and at WMCC both need and deserve to have a full-time on-site principal to lead and oversee school operations.

For more information on education in DJS facilities, see page 41.

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 on Maryland's eastern shore. The facility is operated by Vision Quest, Inc., and licensed by the Department of Juvenile Services to house up to 24 boys. The treatment program at Morning Star is based on the trauma-informed Sanctuary⁹ model.

An influx of new students due to an increase in enrollment numbers as well as the hiring and deployment of new or relatively inexperienced staff to accommodate the increased population has contributed to safety and security issues at Morning Star. In Incident 167602, two youth left their living unit undetected by staff and stole a vehicle from the staff parking lot (a staffer left his keys in the car with doors unlocked). In Incident 167488, a youth left the bench he was sitting on outside the intake area and entered the welcome cottage where he placed a call to his mom. Staff in charge of supervising the youth were unaware he had left the area. The youth reported to his mom that he had been in an altercation with other youth on his living unit and had been hurt. A management investigation after the incident occurred revealed that the youth and his peers had been horse playing in their room unsupervised. Administrators should provide additional training to direct care staff on basic supervision protocols to increase safety at the facility.

During monitoring interviews, youth expressed a need for more organized activities both on and off campus to help reduce high levels of downtime and boredom and also requested more opportunities for youth and staff to engage in fun team building exercises to help build a sense of community and a spirit of camaraderie. In addition to accelerating plans to create a music recording studio on campus, leadership at Morning Star should also offer more structured events and activities which involve youth and staff.

Youth at Morning Star also requested more opportunities and time to keep in touch with loved ones. Youth currently receive three 20-minute calls per week in addition to a virtual phone call (if requested by youth and their parents). Families are often a strong source of support and encouragement and the frequency and duration of phone calls should be increased to help youth sustain strong family ties.

One Love Group Home

One Love Group Home (One Love) is a privately-run 8-bed group home for boys 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 and accepts young people between the ages of 17 and 20.

⁹ For more information on the Sanctuary model, see: <http://www.sanctuaryweb.com/>

Youth reside in a home-like environment with well-trained and nurturing staff that are equipped to handle the needs of young people who require a high level of care and who might otherwise be held in a DJS detention or placement facility. Local resources are leveraged to provide therapeutic, educational, and recreational services. Residents have the opportunity to attend school and work in the surrounding area. One Love serves as a community-based model of care for justice-involved youth.

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN DJS FACILITIES

THE MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN DJS FACILITIES

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is responsible for the delivery of instruction, resources and services for students in the schools within Department of Juvenile Services' (DJS) operated detention and placement facilities.

Starting in July of 2022, education services will be the responsibility of an independent school board focused solely on education in DJS facilities (JJMU written testimony in support of the legislation mandating the changeover is linked in the footnote below).¹⁰

In the meantime, MSDE is to continue to manage the DJS schools.

For the greater part of the second quarter 2021 reporting period, in-person instruction continued to be unavailable to students at DJS facilities. Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, MSDE teachers were withdrawn from DJS schools and youth were given school related packet work to complete instead. The process was overseen by DJS direct care workers. After many months of packet work, plans to provide online/virtual classes for students through the use of Chromebooks were realized. The use of Chromebooks continued up to the current reporting period while in-person teaching was unavailable to students for almost a year. During that time, many students in orientation status or quarantine status as well as some students in facilities who were “suspended” from Chromebook access by MSDE had to continue to make do with packet work as Chromebooks and/or W-Fi access were not always made available to them.

At time of writing (July 2021), in-person teaching of students has re-started in DJS facilities – except in the case of students who are quarantined, in orientation status or suspended. Additionally, youth who need to retake some courses for credit recovery are enabled to do so through an online resource called the Apex Learning Credit Recovery Program. However, students who need to take credit bearing high school diploma eligible courses in core content areas for the first time are not able to do so as instruction is limited to elective and enrichment programming. At time of writing (July 2021), course offerings are limited to summer electives such as classes on research and technical writing; contemporary U.S. issues; and next generation financial literacy. Additionally, available credits for these general elective classes are limited to only a 1/2 credit for each course successfully completed.

¹⁰ JJMU testimony in support of SB 497 (HB 71) [2021]: Juvenile Services Education Board and Program – Establishment, Powers, and Duties. Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee, February 17, 2021. https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/cmte_testimony/2021/jpr/1GzE5XlhyjgO8zG6v07s-HaTB6o-vY6qU.pdf

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 and its efforts to protect the safety and well-being of youth, staff and the community at-large, please see the “DJS COVID-19 Response” document found on the DJS website at https://djs.maryland.gov/Documents/COVID-19/DJS-Overview-COVID-19_08.21.2020.pdf.

VACCINE REQUIREMENTS FOR DJS FACILITY STAFF

On August 5, 2021, Governor Hogan announced that State employees who work in congregate care settings were required to receive their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine by September 1, 2021. Coinciding with the Governor’s announcement, the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) issued an Order that required that all employees in facilities operated by DJS show proof of their vaccine status by September 1, 2021 and any staff who fail to do so will be subject to weekly COVID-19 testing and required to wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment.

While many staff in DJS facilities have already received their COVID-19 vaccine, DJS leadership will continue to work with facility administrators to implement the requirements of the Governor’s Order and encourage unvaccinated staff to get the first dose of the vaccine by September 1. Going forward, DJS will continue to monitor vaccination rates among DJS facility staff and stress the importance of the COVID-19 vaccine as the best available defense for youth and staff against the virus.

CONTINUED COVID-19 TESTING OF STAFF AND YOUTH AT DJS FACILITIES

Since COVID-19 testing began in DJS facilities in May 2020, more than 15,000 tests have been administered to youth and staff in DJS facilities. At the time of this writing, 83 youth in DJS custody have tested positive for COVID-19, with all having fully recovered. Three hundred fifty-four DJS staff have

tested positive with 348 having currently recovered from the virus. In light of the Governor's directive and MDH Order, testing will continue at all DJS facilities.

For updated testing information and other COVID-19 response 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.

COVID-19 INFECTION CONTROL MEASURES

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. These changes were made in consultation with DJS's Medical Director and DJS Health Team, and based on national best practices. Infection control measures such as social distancing, 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 COVID-19 were implemented in an effort to keep youth and staff safe while maintaining the continued operation of DJS's secure facilities.

Additionally, DJS has implemented a pre-entry screening procedure consisting of a questionnaire and a temperature check. 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 or vendors 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 for the 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 control 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.

FACILITY PROGRAMMING DURING THE PANDEMIC

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, DJS has restricted access to its facilities to staff and approved vendors (i.e., food delivery, repair and service professionals, etc.). DJS has begun to lift some restrictions to permit off-grounds outings for the committed treatment programs and programming provided by volunteers and vendors. Volunteers have started to return to facilities to facilitate faith based and other types of programming to youth. In addition, the foster grandparents program has resumed providing services in DJS facilities.

In consultation with the medical team and guidance from the MDH, DJS cannot permit youth to participate in intramurals or cross unit sports due to the level of contact. However, recreation staff have been creative with individual facility competitions such as races, obstacles, and exercise challenges where individual youth times are ranked against other facilities for winning status. DJS leadership will continue to explore additional options for sports related activities. Other leisure activities such as board games, playing cards and movie nights continue to be an option for youth.

Youth who are on quarantine units or medical isolation units are permitted to play single player card games and may go outside with medical approval on a case-by-case basis. The youth on these units are also provided electronic devices to play games and ensure on-going communication with their families and attorneys.

At the time of this writing, 12 youth roundtables have been held with the Deputy Secretary of Operations and his Executive Team to give youth a voice in the decision-making process to improve facility programming, operations, and facility culture. Several suggestions from the youth have been implemented such as a livestream College Panel hosted by students and representatives on the college process and a virtual chess tournament. Additionally, partnerships have been formed with community organizations that will provide youth with workforce development opportunities to build upon youth skills.

The CHAMPS program has a schedule of activities for youth that include virtual escape rooms, DJS Olympics, and annual Reflections Mountain Madness events.

DJS facility staff continue to host activities such as monthly themed programs, arts and crafts projects and horticultural activities in facility gardens and greenhouses. The Behavioral Health Unit has implemented several projects that require youth to work together on team building projects and yoga challenges.

MP3 players have been distributed to youth in all DJS facilities. Youth have access to their MP3 players on a daily basis during leisure time.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

When determining appropriate family visitation procedures, DJS leadership will balance the safety of youth and staff with the benefits to both youth and their families to have in-person interactions at DJS facilities. As such, DJS leadership has lifted some of the restrictions on family visitation at DJS facilities.

Limited visitation continues to be offered daily to parents/guardians/custodians who make an appointment with the Facility Case Manager. With safety measures in place, visitation restrictions on physical contact such as hugging was lifted for families. DJS facilities held outdoor Family Picnic Days during the summer months. These events included music, family photos for parents to take home, food, and fun activities.

Virtual visits with family continue to occur twice a week in addition to in-person visitation. For youth in the committed treatment programs, DJS reinstated the home pass court recommendation process.

NAVIGATING THE NEW NORMAL

DJS recognizes that the “new normal” in its facilities has required an adjustment on the part of staff and youth. From wearing masks to restrictions placed on activities and the use of quarantine and isolation when medically required, DJS acknowledges that these changes could produce anxiety among staff and youth. However, in these challenging times, the agency has witnessed facility staff rising to the occasion and youth demonstrating incredible resiliency and adaptability. DJS remains committed to keep facility staff and youth as safe as possible during this pandemic and to continue to find creative solutions to address programming challenges in the facility.

**DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE SERVICES
RESPONSE TO JJMU 2021 SECOND QUARTER REPORT**

The Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) has reviewed the Juvenile Justice Monitoring Unit's (JJMU) 2021 Second Quarter Report, and provides the following response:

RECENT LEGISLATION WILL SIGNIFICANTLY REFORM THE 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 composed 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 mission of the JJRC was to utilize data to make recommendations to reform the juvenile justice system in Maryland. After a brief delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the group met throughout 2020 in virtual meetings with the last meeting being held on December 17, 2020. To view all of the recorded meetings, presentations and research conducted by the JJRC, please follow the link below.

<https://djs.maryland.gov/Pages/Juvenile-Justice-Reform-Council.aspx>

During the 2021 session of the Maryland General Assembly, Senate Bill 853/House Bill 1187 was passed. That legislation extended the JJRC's operation into 2022, required the JJRC to submit a supplemental report on its findings and recommendations in October 2021, and appropriated \$2 million as an annual budget for ROCA, a program focused on providing supervision and support to young offenders in the community. DJS supported this legislation and looks forward to continuing to work with the stakeholders of the JJRC to continue the development and implementation of more reforms to improve juvenile justice in Maryland.

The Maryland General Assembly also passed Senate Bill 498/House Bill 71, which transfers the responsibility of implementing educational programming from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to the Juvenile Services Education Board and Program. The legislation establishes the Juvenile Services Education Program (JSEP) Board within the Department of Juvenile Services to oversee and provide for educational services to all juveniles placed in a DJS operated detention and residential facility. The JSEP Board would be comprised of representatives from DJS, MSDE, the Attorney General's Office, and others with expertise in education, law, and policy. DJS supported this legislation and looks forward to working with its partners to create a robust educational system that benefits youth in DJS facilities.

DJS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH UNIT CONTINUES TO RECRUIT QUALIFIED PROFESSIONALS

The Behavioral Health Unit has continued to actively recruit for all vacancies to include managerial positions via virtual interviews during this period. Candidates have been selected to fill the vacancies at BCJJC and Noyes for social workers. Behavioral health services at Cheltenham, Hickey and BCJJC are provided via contractual agreement and the contractor is fully staffed. All other detention centers have their full complement of staff. Other behavioral health recruitments are for vacancies at the youth centers and at Victor Cullen. At the youth centers, a regional behavioral health coordinator supervises the behavioral health services and this position is overseen by a behavioral health manager. Recruitments at the youth centers remain active. Due to vacancies at Victor Cullen, headquarters behavioral health staff have been providing onsite support. Interviews for social work positions at VCC have been conducted and more are upcoming.

PHONE CONTACTS FOR YOUTH IN DJS FACILITIES

The leadership of the DJS Operations unit recently became aware of issues that youth were having placing calls through the facility phone system. DJS has contracted with a private vendor known as GTL to provide youth in DJS facilities access to telephones that they can use to call approved family members or caregivers as well as the ability to anonymously call a sexual assault reporting hotline as mandated by federal law. DJS's contract with GTL permits each youth in a DJS facility to make two 10-minute calls to approved individuals per week free of charge.

After a review by leadership in the Operations unit as well as DJS's Office of the Inspector General, it was determined that some facility staff were permitting youth to make a third additional call through the GTL system. However, allowing additional calls was a violation of the DJS/GTL contract.¹¹ Staff members who previously permitted additional phone calls through the GTL system have been counseled. Moving forward, the number of phone calls allowed on the GTL system will be limited to the contractual amount of two 10-minute calls per youth per week.

With the confusion regarding the use of the GTL phone system now resolved, the "Youth Access to Telephone Calls" policy and procedure implemented by DJS leadership in March 2021 remains in place for the benefit of DJS youth and families. Under this policy, youth residing DJS facilities receive a minimum of five calls to approved family members/significant persons per week. This includes two 10-minute phone calls through the GTL system, one 20-minute phone call made through a facility case management specialist and two 15-minute virtual video calls. As noted previously, this represents the minimum number of phone contacts for youth in DJS facilities with additional phone contacts available

¹¹ Since the system only permits two calls per youth per week, additional calls resulted in the GTL automated system prompting family members to pay as they would for a collect call. DJS operations leadership and other staff met with the vendor, who has since corrected the "glitch" that resulted in the request for payment.

for therapeutic purposes as directed by behavioral health staff and as a reward through the behavior management system.

Committed Programs

Victor Cullen Center (VCC)

The treatment program at VCC focuses on behavioral health services matched to the individualized treatment needs of each youth. Youth receive individual and group counseling weekly as well as family counseling and psychiatric services as needed. The program provides evidence informed services including the Seven Challenges program, Trauma Addictions Mental Health and Recovery for Youth (TAMAR-Y) curriculum, and Social Skills Training and Aggression Replacement Techniques (START) groups. In addition, Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) is provided to youth identified as in need of this service. Additionally, all VCC staff have been trained in trauma informed care, which is a framework for helping staff understand how trauma affects youth behavior and applying trauma sensitive strategies.

Youth at VCC follow a weekday schedule that includes education, large muscle activity, leisure time, and treatment groups. All youth are assigned a behavioral health therapist for individual sessions that occur, at a minimum, weekly. Virtual activities include faith-based services, yoga, and chess. The youth also participate in structured activities such as painting, 3-point shoot-outs, woodshop, gaming tournaments, ping-pong tournaments, assisting in the greenhouse, and other activities.

In May 2021, VCC implemented a new staffing schedule that incorporated a 3-shift rotation instead of the existing 2-shift rotation. Since implementing this new schedule, the facility has decreased overtime and the need to draft staff to cover shifts.

VCC continues to recruit for a mental health worker supervisor as well as two behavioral health clinicians to add to the two full time clinicians, both of whom have been at Victor Cullen for over a year and a half. One of the clinicians has been on extended leave and as a result, several other behavioral health clinicians have been providing clinical services. Full time onsite administrative oversight of behavioral health services is provided by a combination of support from two behavioral managers and the Director of Behavioral Health all of whom also provide clinical services.

Youth at VCC have the opportunity to earn their GED while in placement. Once they receive GED, they complete life skills groups presented by the Case Managers and participate in the Greenhouse and Woodshop Programs. In addition, youth who have obtained their GED and are doing well in the life skills program are given the opportunity to do additional work around the campus. When a youth takes the initiative to improve the environment at the facility, they are recognized and rewarded through the behavior management system, which can include food items of their choice or additional phone calls.

Garrett Children's Center (GCC)

Operations at GCC were indefinitely suspended in late 2020 and, as such, no youth were in the facility during the second quarter of 2021.

Youth Centers

With respect to the youth from Backbone Mountain Youth Center referenced by the JJMU in its Report, the youth was initially placed in the dayroom due to concerns for the youth's safety after an altercation with another youth. Facility administration, behavioral health and case management staff made several attempts to process with the youth and reassure him of his safety. All of these attempts were unsuccessful. The youth continued to express concerns about his safety and refused to re-enter the general population while he waited for his upcoming court date scheduled for the following week. Ultimately, the youth appeared at the court hearing and was released back to the community by the court.

To promote positive youth behaviors, DJS continues to implement Facility-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (FW-PBIS), to allow youth to focus on meeting treatment goals. FW-PBIS is designed to teach and support positive behaviors among youth during activities and settings throughout the facility and increase positive youth behaviors. Backbone Mountain Youth Center has a team that meets regularly to discuss practices to promote positive youth behaviors in the facility. These behaviors include teaching and modeling appropriate social and problem-solving skills, ensuring there are clear behavioral expectations posted for youth and staff, reinforcing youth for meeting behavioral expectations, and applying de-escalation strategies with other behavioral interventions to assist youth in meeting behavioral expectations. DJS will continue to promote positive youth behaviors in the facility to have a positive impact on interpersonal issues.

Despite some limitations due to COVID-19 mitigation measures, youth from the Youth Centers were able to take part in Reflections trips and outings to various parks for bike riding, fishing, hiking, and other activities. Recently, youth from Green Ridge Youth Center were able to take an educational trip, in collaboration with the Maryland State Department of Education, to Antietam Battlefield in Sharpsburg, Maryland. Backbone Mountain Youth Center is planning two community service-based outings in August and September with Hearts for Animals Hospital.

Mountain View

The DJS Information Technology Department is working on completing the installation of phone and cable line for computers in the new administration facility along with wiring for camera installation.

The facility Case Manager is meeting the needs of the young ladies that includes providing individual counseling, group counseling, and phone calls on a consistent basis.

For a detailed response regarding phone calls and visitation, please refer to the Introduction Section of this Response.

Regarding the confiscation of the youth's artwork, the youth painted an inappropriate drug-related image. The item was initially taken during a search of the dorm area. When given the opportunity cover up the drug-related elements of the image, the youth refused. Consistent with DJS policy and procedure, the administration was required to remove the inappropriate imagery from the youth living space.

DJS is currently exploring the feasibility of a dog therapy program at Mountain View.

Detention Centers

Baltimore City Juvenile Justice Center (BCJJC)

For a detailed response regarding phone calls and visitation, please refer to the Introduction Section of this Response.

Youth on quarantine units are offered one hour of large muscle activity outside every day per medical orders weather permitting.

As of August 2021, barbering services were being provided at the facility every two weeks while adhering to COVID-19 mitigation measures.

Cheltenham Youth Detention Center (CYDC)

Regarding Incident 167130, an administrative review determined that the staff did not have proper justification for restraining the youth. The staff was removed from coverage and held accountable through the standards of conduct. The staff was retrained in verbal de-escalation and referred for additional training.

In reference to Incident 167264, administrative review indicated that the staff member involved did not respond appropriately. The DJS seclusion policy was reviewed and acknowledged in the latest all staff meeting and has been added to the shift briefing.

In regards to Grievance 16946, the superintendent made adjustments to ensure that the preferred interpreter was assigned to this youth.

Charles H. Hickey, Jr., School (Hickey)

Services are individualized for each youth to address specific behaviors and/or emotional needs while detained. Behavioral health clinicians collaborate with the unit team members to develop behavior plans and ensure they meet the unique needs of each youth. Similarities between behavior plans and interventions may exist as some behavioral issues are common among youth at the facility.

MSDE has a psychologist and a counselor who provide services for the youth while in school. In addition, behavioral health staff are available for the youth during the school day when requested by staff and/or youth and respond when contacted for any needed interventions. Sessions are held before school, during the school day break, and after school. Education hours are essential for the youth and it is best practice to minimize disruptions to their learning time as much as possible. Behavioral health staff have been in the practice of accompanying a unit to school particularly when there has been a crisis or an issue on the unit. They also periodically circulate through the school to observe classrooms.

For a detailed response regarding phone calls and visitation, please refer to the Introduction Section of this Response.

DJS community case managers verify and approve phone numbers and individuals on a youth's approved phone call list. Youth may call any number on their approved phone list. Prior to adding a new person to the list, community case managers are required to work with the legal guardian to ensure that the person to be added is an appropriate person for the youth to have contact.

While barbering Services were limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Hickey administration has recently implemented a twice a month schedule for barbers to cut youth's hair at the facility while adhering to COVID-19 mitigation measures.

Thomas J.S. Waxter Childrens' Center (Waxter)

Waxter has a Facility Preventive Maintenance Plan that includes daily, weekly, and monthly inspections to address all physical plant and cleanliness concerns. All identified maintenance concerns are submitted through the DJS work order system for immediate corrections. Waxter has also increased the contractual cleaning services to ensure a clean, safe, and humane environment is provided for the youth and staff.

The main HVAC unit for the kitchen was recently replaced and the HVAC units for A&B units are currently in the process of being replaced through a DGS project. There is a rental unit supplying adequate air to the youth sleeping areas on B unit.

All DJS detention and placement facility staff receive training in Youth Mental Health First Aid and Trauma Informed Care. Youth Mental Health First Aid USA is an education program that introduces

participants to the unique risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems in adolescents, builds understanding of the importance of early intervention, and teaches individuals how to help an adolescent in crisis or experiencing a mental health challenge. This year, DJS began training all staff in “Think Trauma: A Training for Staff in Juvenile Justice Residential Settings.” This is a skills-based, interactive trauma-focused training curriculum for frontline staff, educators, administrators, and others who work with adolescents in juvenile justice residential settings.

Detention centers have onsite clinical expertise to address youth needs. During the 2nd Quarter, there were six licensed clinical staff and two addictions counselors assigned to work at Waxter during this period. This included two doctoral level clinicians and several others who have significant expertise in addressing the needs of this population.

The young woman whose multiple incidents were described in the JJMU 2nd Quarter Report suffered from severe mental health issues, as the JJMU acknowledged. DJS executive leadership wishes to recognize all of the Waxter staff from the administration to direct-care staff and behavioral health staff who did all they possibly could to look out for her best interests. Through their professional yet compassionate care, the Waxter staff protected and supported the young woman during a difficult time.

During the young woman’s stay at Waxter, behavioral health staff made daily phone calls to local inpatient hospitals to attempt to locate a bed for her. Despite being evaluated on an emergency basis on three occasions by different hospitals, a suitable placement could not be identified at that time. This youth’s psychiatric medication was overseen, managed, and adjusted by University of Maryland Telepsychiatry weekly throughout her stay in detention. On July 21, 2021, the youth was ultimately admitted to placement at inpatient psychiatric hospital in Maryland.

DJS is collaborating with multiple agencies to advocate for an increase in inpatient psychiatric care for youth Statewide.

For particularly traumatic experiences, DJS behavioral health is available upon request to support staff.

Alfred D. Noyes Children’s Center (Noyes)

Food services have been provided at Noyes by a private vendor for many years and concerns presented to them have always been corrected immediately. Regarding Grievance 16961, descriptions, and photos of the meal in question were forwarded to both the DJS Food Service Director and the vendor, who addressed the concerns. DJS will continue to monitor the quality of the food and encourage both youth and staff to present any concerns for immediate resolution.

Lower Eastern Shore Children’s Center (LESCC)

During a period of time when laptops and tablets were being replaced, youth on the quarantine unit were given the opportunity for nine phone calls a week to allow for continued family contacts. Once the new tablets were distributed at the facility, youth on the quarantine units were able to resume video calls. The facility keeps a calendar of virtual calls to ensure youth are receiving them at the scheduled time.

Western Maryland Children’s Center (WMCC)

During the 2nd Quarter, WMCC had a higher than usual number of call-outs due to COVID-19 related issues among the staff. Nevertheless, the facility maintained required staffing ratios at all times.

WMCC continues to regularly interview for resident advisors and has five staff that have recently completed their entry-level training. The recruitment for the recreation specialist position is now closed and a candidate has been identified. The Case Management Specialist Supervisor has returned full time to the facility.

Private Programs

Silver Oak Academy

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1. “The average daily population of youth placed at Silver Oak decreased by 40% in the second quarter of 2021 when compared to the second quarter of 202. During the same time period both youth fights and assaults and incident involving physical restraints of youth by staff increased by 50%.”

SOA Response: The ROP program model relies on full services and program rigor to effectively engage students and to deter anti-social behaviors and aggression. The comparison between the 2020 and 2021 second quarters serves to support this reliance. The second quarter of 2020 includes two months of pre-COVID outbreak full programming with a census in the mid-thirties and a high percentage of students who had already advanced within the SOA program. By contrast, the second quarter of 2021 was reflective of a student census rebuilding and a staff team working with program service limitations of COVID protocols and a low student census. These adverse circumstances were exacerbated by staff recruiting during the COVID pandemic. An in

ordinate number of the incidents involved one student who had been accepted to SOA despite a history of assaultive behaviors in prior DJS placements.

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2. "Issue with staff supervision and staff adherence to key and lock control protocols at Silver Oak should be addressed through refresher training and staff accountability measures. In Incident 167571, youth were riding bikes on campus in a designated area when three youth broke from the group without staff detection and pedaled across campus to a living unit not in use. The doors to the living unit should have been locked, however the kids went inside the building and accessed a phone which was located in an office (which should also have been locked). The kids placed two prank 911 calls within fifteen minutes of each other and told the dispatcher that there were kids with guns riding around on bikes on campus. Police responded to the facility and eventually discovered that the boys were responsible for the calls."

SOA Response: Staff have been trained on interactive supervision and the number of activities on weekends have been limited to enhance supervision. Shift supervisors are checking buildings and documenting that the doors are secure.

DJS Response: The Department previously requested a Correction Action Plan from the program due to lack of adequate supervision by staff. Silver Oak provided the Department with an acceptable CAP. The Department has been conducting weekly visits to ensure Silver Oak has remained compliant with the CAP in place to address staff supervision. The Department will continue to work with and monitor Silver Oak regarding staff supervision.

3. "Youth placed at Silver Oak have far fewer opportunities for family contact than those held at DJS facilities. Youth at Silver Oak receive two 15-minute phone calls twice per week and one virtual call (and if parents are available and able to travel, one in-person visit per month). Silver Oak should increase family contact for youth. Juvenile justice experts have noted that "in person visit and other methods of social support, such as phone calls and letter writing, play an important role in minimizing the stress and isolation attributed to system involvement" and that "maintaining family relationships during incarceration appears to help buffer youths against depression and other mental health, behavioral, and academic issues while confined. Such relationships also offer youth's motivation, material, and emotional support"

SOA Response: Students are provided the opportunity to have extra phone calls or video calls with their family members. They choose whether they want to do a video call or a normal phone call with their families. The Case Manager and the Group Living staff have been working together to ensure that students receive their phone calls each week. Silver Oak Academy will add phone calls during the week after dinner so that youth are able to have increased contact with their families. (Ms. Kirk can facilitate this and it can be zoom or by phone)

In comparing SOA to detention centers, it is important to acknowledge that SOA utilizes staff members to provide a rich daily schedule to school sports and vocations to keep students engaged. While this level of activities and engagement has been difficult to sustain during the pandemic and census reduction, the delivery of services has and will always remain in balance with family visits and phone calls. Parents' involvement in their sons normalized activities such as attending sports events, VALADATION ceremonies and graduations are often overlooked as meaningful moments of accomplishment by student and parents. These opportunities will be increased as we work our way through COVID restrictions.

DJS Response: The Department has been conducting monthly interviews with youth in the program. During these interviews, youth have stated no issues or concerns regarding the amount of phone calls/virtual calls they have received. Youth have reported they are able to have more phone/virtual contact with family during the pandemic. The Department has been working with Silver Oak to safely increase onsite visits within the guidelines and recommendations set by Local Health Department, the Department Medical Unit and the CDC.

4. "Efforts to hire an additional case manager and on-site mental health clinician to accommodate the needs of residential and day student should be prioritized."

SOA Response: SOA has been operating well within Case Management/student ratios and is currently training a person with the current case manager in anticipation of increased census/workload. Recruiting for a licensed mental health clinician during the COVID pandemic has been challenging, but a practitioner has been hired and is currently providing services. SOA is recruiting for a second clinical position in anticipation of an increased census.

DJS Response: The Department has been working with Silver Oak to ensure that youth mental health needs are being met. Silver Oak was previously using Local YSB services to address the mental health needs of the youth until the program was able to hire full time Clinical Director on July 6, 2021. Since being hired, the Clinical director has been holding group sessions weekly as well as individual sessions for youth as needed.

VisionQuest Morning Star (VQMS)

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1. "An influx of new students due to an increase in enrollment numbers as well as the hiring and deployment of new or relatively inexperienced staff to accommodate the increased population has contributed to safety and security issues at Morning Star. In Incident 167602, two youth left their living unit undetected by staff and stole a vehicle from the staff parking lot (a staffer left his keys in the car with doors unlocked). In Incident 167488, a youth left the bench he was sitting on outside the intake area and entered the welcome cottage where he placed a call to his mom. Staff in charge of supervising the youth were unaware he had left the area. The

youth reported to his mom that he had been in an altercation with other youth on his living unit and had been hurt. A management investigation after the incident occurred revealed that the youth and his peers had been horse playing in their room unsupervised. Administrators should provide additional training to direct care staff on basic supervision protocols to increase safety at the facility.”

VQMS Responses: As a result of the program internal review, it was determined that the staff member in question be released from his employment with Vision Quest. In addition, all staff received additional training regarding Key Control, Supervision of Youth and Communication. Ongoing trainings will continue quarterly and on an as needed basis to address Supervision, communication and key control. Along with additional trainings the Supervisors and Program Director have increased the number of times they are making random checks of groups to ensure effective supervision. The additional checks will be indicated in the Supervisors log book. All staff are required to secure their vehicle keys in the program safe and document the turning in and retrieving of keys on the key control log. The verification of the Key Control Procedure will be documented in the Program Master Log Book and will include the Shift Supervisor physically identifying each staff key as it relates to what is documented on the log. The Key Control Logs are also reviewed on a daily basis by the Program Director or designee for compliance. Any issues or trends are reported at the program’s Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) meeting.

DJS Responses: L&M reviews all VQMS incident reports for compliance with COMAR 14.31.06 and all applicable policies. Any areas of concern are addressed by L&M by providing technical assistance or requiring a corrective action plan (CAP). VQMS was required to provide a CAP for Incident 167602. 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 supervision.

2. “During monitoring interviews, youth expressed a need for more organized activities both on and off campus to help reduce high levels of downtime and boredom and also requested more opportunities for youth and staff to engage in fun team building exercises to help build a sense of community and a spirit of camaraderie. In addition to accelerating plans to create a music recording studio on campus, leadership at Morning Star should also offer more structured events and activities which involve youth and staff.”

VQMS Responses: The program offers many activities such as the swimming pool, basketball hoops and tournaments, kickball games and weight room. The program has also identified staff members who conduct team building, arts and crafts, and afternoon game activities. The CCW’s, teachers and supervisors are encouraged to engage and participate in the additional activities offered in order to build and strengthen relationships with the youth. Activities such as building a volcano from scratch, relay races, water balloon wars, basketball tournaments, kick ball games have been offered to work on team building, communication and improved leisure activities, all of which include staff participation. Additionally events such as board games, bingo, Canvas

painting, tie-dyeing shirts have been added to encourage individual expression, small team partnerships and healthy leisure skills. The youth are engaged in small group session to discuss and illicit ideas and feedback for their activities, all of which include the staff assigned to their units and any other staff available to participate.

DJS Responses: 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 providing youth with a range of recreational and enrichment activities. Youth are interviewed monthly. Youth interviewed by L&M have not voiced any concerns regarding activities. Additionally, it should be noted that the current COVID 19 pandemic limits the activities options VQMS can offer youth.

3. "Youth at Morning Star also requested more opportunities and time to keep in touch with loved ones. Youth currently receive three 20-minute calls per week in addition to a virtual phone call (if requested by youth and their parents). Families are often a strong source of support and encouragement and the frequency and duration of phone calls should be increased to help youth sustain strong family ties."

VQMS Responses: The program acknowledges the importance and encourages family involvement. The program offers a minimum of 3 phone calls per week and virtual calls whenever possible. The program also offers bi weekly on site visitation.

DJS Responses: L&M is closely monitoring youth access to their family. This is being done through monthly youth interviews and weekly audits of youth telephone logs.

**MARYLAND STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
- RESPONSE**



August 23, 2021

MSDE Response to the Juvenile Justice Monitoring Unit’s Second Quarter Report

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has reviewed the Juvenile Justice Monitoring Unit’s (JJMU) 2021 second 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

COVID-19 RESPONSE

During the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2020-2021 school year, teachers were in the buildings and classrooms five days a week until the beginning of second semester, February 2021. In response to health-related safety concerns for students and staff, MSDE and DJS collaboratively determined that teachers needed to reduce time in the buildings and classrooms to two consecutive days a week. Beginning May 24th teachers increased this time to three days a week and beginning June 28th teachers returned to the buildings five days a week. During this time, the building principal or their designee continued to report to buildings five days a week to ensure that the 1:1 Chromebooks provided by the Juvenile Services Education System (JSES) and any materials needed for instruction were provided to students. Students were provided synchronous instruction through Chromebooks provided by JSES. The purpose of providing instruction in a virtual setting with teacher support in the classrooms on certain days was designed to:

- limit cross-contamination of the coronavirus by reducing the movement of teachers and students between classrooms,
- provide students online access to a certified teacher in each content area due to absences caused by emergencies and sporadic teacher-required quarantines, student required quarantines, and other COVID-19 related absences, and
- limit instructional disruptions due to COVID-19 related issues such as long-term absences, student quarantine on units, and mandatory school closings.

Teachers were placed into instructional teams, which included two content certified teachers and at least one special education teacher. This instructional model has proven to be highly beneficial for overall instructional programming. If a teacher was absent, students continued to have access to certified teachers. Teachers provided direct, synchronous instruction aligned to all Maryland state standards. Courses in English, mathematics, science, social studies, and Career and Technical Education (CTE)

were held for at least 70 minutes each day. Students participated in synchronous virtual learning through direct instruction and had time allotted to complete work independently. During synchronous online instruction, teachers engaged students in learning using Google applications and other instructional technology tools. Synchronous learning, using Cisco WebEx and/or Google Meets, provided students with an opportunity to ask questions, receive feedback, and receive needed support in a timely manner. Teachers that streamed used GoGuardian in order to monitor student use and engagement during virtual learning. GoGuardian allowed teachers to observe student online activities in real-time with the capability to shut down inappropriate browsing, utilize selected sites for instruction, chat directly with students to provide individualized support, diversify activities, and increase student participation through encouragement.

When school-based teachers were not streaming, they provided the following assistance to students either physically in the classroom or via WebEx and/or Google Meets in order to:

- encourage students to complete assignments,
- tutor struggling students and provide support as needed,
- manage classroom behaviors to keep students on task,
- mentor students during instruction, and
- provide small group direct instruction and assistance.

Since the beginning of the 2021 summer term, teachers returned to face-to-face instruction and incorporated the use of blended learning instructional models with the integration of technology. High school students were provided with an opportunity to obtain credits toward Maryland high school graduation requirements through credit recovery, Apex Learning Virtual School online courses, and/or JSES elective courses. JSES will continue to adhere to DJS medical team protocols for staff and students and monitor CDC guidance as it relates to COVID-19.

GENERAL MISCONCEPTIONS

MSDE JSES summer program does not offer credit-bearing classes in core content areas and the elective courses are limited to ½ credit for each course successfully completed. Students who need to take credit bearing high school diploma eligible courses in core content areas for the first time are not able to do so as instruction is limited to elective and enrichment programming. (page 2, 42)

JSES' 2020-2021 school year school calendar began on September 8, 2020, and ended on June 25, 2021. Students are able to take coursework in both first-time course enrollment and credit recovery courses, to earn credits to meet Maryland State requirements toward graduation. JSES summer school began on July 1, 2021, and will end on August 25, 2021. Summer programming is designed for students to either recover credits for courses previously taken or failed, take new half-credit courses such as health or music, or take JSES elective courses that allow students to earn needed elective credits toward graduation. Because summer programming is only six weeks, students are unable to earn the same number of credits they could earn during the school year. However, students can earn up to 2.0 JSES elective credits during the summer session.

The JSES school calendar aligns with local school system (LSS) calendars. Therefore, JSES follows the same academic school year and summer school model as LSS. This alignment allow for a seamless transition from the JSES schools to the LSS schools.

JSES previously operated under an all-year continuous course enrollment model. Students were allowed to start a new, first-time course during the regular school year and in the summer. If a student exited JSES in the summer, they were unable to continue with that course in their LSS. The alignment of JSES schedules with the LSS schedules was made to prevent students from having to repeat courses.

Instruction remained virtual (via Chromebook) during the second quarter 2021 with teachers on-site two to three days per week to provide technical support; Many students continued to rely on DJS employees to provide consistent educational support (instructional as well as logistical) during the quarter. (page 4)

DJS staff are not highly qualified teachers with certifications and are not required nor asked to provide instructional support. In order to support and assist students during the virtual instruction, teachers were always available via microphones, chats, and by phone. When in the building, teachers assisted students in their learning and provided additional support, as needed. Teachers in the classrooms were not just technology support on the days they were in the buildings.

During periods of quarantine or medical isolation, youth at most facilities received packets to complete on their own due to limited internet access for Chromebook use outside of school areas. Administrators at MSDE JSES indicated that flash drives would be provided so that students in facility areas with poor connectivity could still partake in virtual education, however this initiative was not been widely instituted. (pages 4, 8, 19, 21, 25)

MSDE JSES staff members are not allowed in the quarantined areas. MSDE provides internet access within the educational areas. Student internet access was not available on DJS living units. However, some of the smaller facilities could access the Wi-Fi from education areas, and in those cases, students received the live stream. When internet was unavailable and/or students were not in the school building, students received prerecorded lessons and work that could be completed offline on Chromebooks using flash drives. MSDE administrators did not create packets for instruction. On an as needed basis, there were instances when students were provided hard copies of the materials from the flash drive to accommodate student needs. All instructional materials and flash drives were returned to the principal and then given to the teachers, in order for the teachers to provide feedback and grade assignments.

The JSES only provided students with instructional material without student request or accommodation in the following situations:

- The student is a newly enrolled JSES student and on quarantine (the resources include supplemental materials for instruction)
- When safety and security purposes require students to not have access to a Chromebook or flash drive

All students newly admitted to a JSES facility are required to quarantine for 14 days on the admissions unit. Chromebooks are not provided to students on the admissions unit for the following reasons:

- Records must be obtained for these students to determine which courses they should be enrolled in. This process often takes several days and may take longer due to delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic when local school system staff were in their buildings for a limited time. The attainment of student records can also be delayed due to limited LSS staffing during the summer months.
- For safety reasons, when students are on quarantine, MSDE staff members do not have physical access or physical interaction with them. Once the school administration is notified of new students on the admissions unit, the principal or designee ensures that the students receive instructional materials aligned to Maryland's College and Career Ready Standards.

The school at Cullen shares a principal with Western Maryland Children's Center. Students attending the school at Victor Cullen and students at WMCC independently need and deserve to have a full-time on-site principal to lead and oversee school operations at each location (pages 8-9, 37)

Over the past 12 months the population of students at Victor Cullen has been as high as 16 and as low as three students, with an average population of ten students. The student population at Western Maryland Children Center has been as high as 16 students and as low as nine students, with an average population of 12 students. The principal is available by phone, video conferencing, and email when he/she is not on site. The principal is at the school two or three times a week based on the needs of the students and staff. The data does not support a full-time principal at each school.

Many students at Victor Cullen were barred from using Chromebooks for various periods of time during the second quarter. Administrators at MSDE JSES cited "safety and security concerns" as the reasons for confiscating the Chromebooks. Rather than increasing supervision and providing more frequent and consistent in-person education support for students as they engaged in virtual education, the students concerned were given packets of education-related worksheets to complete (page 9).

When technology is issued, all students must sign an Acceptable Use Policy and each school administrator has the responsibility and autonomy to manage student usage of the technology issued to them. JSES continues to respond to reports of students circumventing Internet web filters by blacklisting sites, investigating instances of misuse, and refining internet security processes.

Due to the diligence of JSES staff during virtual instruction and monitoring of student Chromebooks, incidences in which students accessed pornography, social media websites, and communication with others in and outside of the facilities are addressed immediately. In the case of Victor Cullen, several students violated the Acceptable Use Policy. Students who chose to violate the policy, were warned prior to Chromebooks being removed and as a remedy, JSES changed the mode of instruction to ensure the safe and secure use of Chromebooks for instructional purposes. In situations of this nature, students

do not have access to the internet; however, they are able to access recorded lessons and complete the same work on the Chromebooks offline or use printed materials.

Vacancies should be filled without delay to minimize disruptions in instruction (page 9)

In collaboration with the MSDE Human Resource (HR) Director, weekly meetings continue as a concrete process to assist the JSES with hiring and retention of staff. Filling vacancies and hiring quality staff continues to be a major focus and goal. In collaboration with HR, the JSES reviews applications on a weekly schedule for all open positions and forward screened applications to principals for interviews.

Virtual education has been a struggle for many students, including those with special education needs and ELL students (English-language learners) who have had to rely on DJS direct-care workers and other non-education professionals for assistance with their work. In Grievance 16946, a youth who spoke only Spanish requested a specific interpreter who worked with him in the past and who is proactive about assisting students with school work. As the student stated in a grievance he wrote, “the interpreter helps me with my school work and translates and explains what to do” (Grievance 16946). (pages 21-22)

Special Education: Students received their special education services and supports with a special education teacher in the classroom, through a special education teacher in the virtual learning environment, and through students meeting with their special education case manager for support virtually or in person. Accommodations and related services, including speech services, continued to be provided to all students as outlined in their IEP. Special education students were provided access to special education teachers for one-on-one questions, additional support and/or supplemental instruction. Students also had the opportunity to meet with their special education case manager to provide additional instructional support, when needed.

English Learners:

Local school systems do not provide interpreters for English Learner (EL) students in the classroom, nor does JSES. In fact, EL acquisition is often limited by an interpreter because the student is not required to become proficient in English. DJS provides interpreters. The only time an interpreter is required in the education setting is when a student requires sign language or an interpreter is needed to communicate with a parent. JSES teachers have received multiple professional development sessions on working with EL students and built a bank of resources that any teacher can use in the classroom. JSES currently has two ESOL positions located at Cheltenham and Noyes which are utilized to provide individualized sessions for students.

The Charles Hickey library is only accessible to students every other week. Library hours should be expanded to accommodate youth need. (page 25)

During the second quarter, units participated in weekly rotations through the library after school hours. In addition to these regular rotations, the school library/media specialist made frequent checks during

the school day while students were in class and delivered books directly to students. MSDE has provided students access to Nooks on the units with more than 100 downloaded books.

Due to an outbreak of COVID-19 in which seven girls tested positive for the virus, neither in-person or virtual school services were available at Waxter for over two weeks during the reporting period. Students were given with packets of worksheets to complete on their own even as administrators at MSDE indicated that Chromebooks with flash drives would be provided so that students (even in DJS facility areas with poor connectivity) could still partake in virtual education. (page 31)

During the COVID-19 quarantine and floor replacement at Waxter, JSES provided multiple options to DJS in order to provide instruction to student on the units. The facility superintendent selected to use written instructional materials and Google Meet sessions were scheduled for each unit, for each period, during school hours in order to support instruction and to provide re-teaching and/or tutoring. JSES staff met with students to provide feedback on student progress and to review concerns.

Leadership at MSDE JSES should continue to ensure that supports and services provided through MCPS to the school at Noyes remain in place throughout the approaching new academic year. (page 33)

The Montgomery County Public Schools grant has been extended to January 2022.

For the greater part of the second quarter 2021 reporting period, in-person instruction continued to be unavailable to students at DJS facilities. Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, MSDE teachers were withdrawn from DJS schools and youth were given school related packet work to complete instead. The process was overseen by DJS direct care workers. (page 42)

During a meeting on June 10, 2020, Dr. Karen Salmon, State Superintendent and Mr. Sam Abed, Secretary of Juvenile Services agreed that JSES teachers should return to schools for in-person instruction. JSES teachers returned to the schools on June 22, 2020, for in-person instruction. However, there was no way of determining which teacher or school would be affected by COVID-19. Due to the fluctuation of staff and students being infected and/or exposed, administrators developed a plan to deliver instruction following the CDC guidelines. In doing so, JSES designed a system of instructional delivery that provided quality instruction while maintaining safety guidelines for students and teachers, as well as ensuring that students have access to a highly qualified teacher in every content area every day. In addition, principals implemented a variety of strategies to help ensure that teachers actively supported students. Strategies include but are not limited to:

- student grades and progress are monitored weekly to confirm appropriate progress and/or the identification of needed interventions;
- students are selected for weekly meetings with the principal to discuss support received or needed from teachers during the instructional day;
- regular student interviews are conducted by the principal, teacher supervisors, guidance

counselors, and special education case managers to ensure student needs are being met and that the instructional staff is responsive;

- daily meeting to communicate concerns and priorities for the day to all staff including student concerns, grading issues, technology challenges, staffing adjustments, professional development reminders, etc.;
- regular observation of classrooms by the school principal, teacher supervisor, and instructional coach to ensure that staff are engaging with students, including virtual participation in streaming sessions, physical classroom walkthroughs, informal observations, and monitoring of student participation in the Go Guardian platform;
- teachers are provided with regular time to collaborate and plan to ensure that lessons are engaging and differentiated as needed;
- professional development training is specific and allow sharing of best practices;
- special educators are provided regular case management time to support students receiving special education services in both the physical classroom and virtually when students are on quarantine;
- review camera footage in the classrooms to ensure active teaching and student interaction; and
- arrange additional support for struggling students with subject area experts in the building.

DJS direct care workers did not oversee this process.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic has required school districts across the world to develop new and innovative ways to provide education. The JSES has risen to that challenge in many unique and creative ways. The commitment of the MSDE JSES to provide quality educational opportunities to all students is unwavering. MSDE JSES staff is committed to providing students quality continuity of learning during and after the pandemic. The MSDE JSES will continue to improve and adapt to the changing nature of the pandemic while ensuring that students are continually engaged in high quality instruction.