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Governor Hogan Names Five Appointees to the Juvenile Services Education Board

Board members will oversee and guide implementation of education policy in all DJS facilities

Baltimore, MD – Governor Larry Hogan has named five appointees to serve on the newly-created Juvenile Services Education Board within the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS). Each appointee brings years of experience and commitment to improve the education and lives of young people in Maryland. The five appointees are: Dr. Peter Leone, Dr. Catherine Gammage, Grace Reusing, Dr. Bernard Sadusky and Dr. Tracey L. Durant.

During the 2021 session, the Maryland General Assembly passed and Governor Hogan signed into law Senate Bill 497, which transfers the responsibility of implementing educational programming from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to the Juvenile Services Education Board.

The legislation was sponsored by Senator Delores G. Kelley and supported by Delegate Eric G. Luedtke and the Secretary of DJS, Sam Abed. Senate Bill 497 establishes the Juvenile Services Education Board (Board) within DJS to oversee and provide for educational services to all youth placed in a DJS-operated detention and residential facility. In addition to the five experts appointed to the Board by Governor Hogan, the Board will include representatives from DJS, MSDE, Higher Education, the Attorney General's Office, a representative of the Public Schools Superintendents' Association, and a Juvenile Services Educator member.

“Senate Bill 497 presents a significant step forward by establishing a Board of Education to provide governance and improve a system that is so essential to the rehabilitation of our youth,” said Senator Delores G. Kelley. “I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Delegate Luedtke and my co-sponsors of the Bill as well as the Governor. I would also like to extend commendation to the Office of the Public Defender and the Maryland State NAACP, whose continued diligence over the years spurred this movement to assure just treatment for all children in Maryland.”

“I am encouraged by the prompt appointments of these five highly qualified members of the Board” said Delegate Eric Luedtke. “Together, I trust that they will be instrumental in moving JSEP in a new direction that will empower educators and provide the quality education that these students deserve.”

“The creation of the JSEP is a major step in improving the quality of education services for youth involved in the juvenile justice system,” said Secretary Abed. “The Board is going to set the direction for the JSEP and I am excited that we have five stellar appointees to get the process started.”

The five appointees named to serve on the Board are as follows:

Dr. Peter Leone recently retired from the University of Maryland, College Park, where he taught in the College of Education and served for many years as the director of the National Center on Education, Disability, and Juvenile Justice. Dr. Leone earned his Ph.D. in special education from the University of Washington in Seattle. He has published extensively in the area of education for youth in the juvenile justice system and served as a consultant and expert witness on this issue throughout the United States.

Dr. Catherine Gammage is an experienced educator who holds a doctorate in organizational leadership from Abilene Christian University. She most recently served as the principal at the Silver Oak Academy in Keymar, Maryland for nine years. Her work at Silver Oak included developing workforce and apprenticeship programming for children in the juvenile justice system. Dr. Gammage has also worked as an educator in Hawaii and Virginia, with a special focus on students with disabilities and early childhood special education.

Grace Reusing is an attorney with the Maryland Office of the Public Defender. For nearly a decade, she has focused her work on monitoring the conditions of confinement for justice-involved youth and ensuring the provision of quality educational services for her clients. She previously served as the Deputy District Public Defender in Baltimore City. She graduated from the University of Maryland Law School and is a licensed attorney in both Maryland and Pennsylvania.

Dr. Bernard Sadusky serves as Executive Director for the Maryland Association of Community Colleges. He took this role in July 2012, after completing a year of service as interim superintendent at the Maryland State Department of Education. Previously, Dr. Sadusky served as superintendent of schools in Queen Anne's County from 1994 to 2007, and spent more than 30 years in the Queen Anne's school system as an administrator and teacher. He was recognized as Maryland's Superintendent of the Year in 2007. He holds a doctorate in educational administration from Nova-Southeastern University.

Dr. Tracey L. Durant is the Executive Director of Equity for Baltimore City Public Schools, where she is responsible for leading system-wide initiatives designed to promote equitable practices, systems, and structures that ensure positive educational outcomes. Prior to assuming her current position, she served as a Specialist in the Department of Equity and Cultural Proficiency for Baltimore County Public Schools. She is a College Bound Foundation Distinguished Alumni and was named one of the Daily Record's Top 100 Women in 2018. She holds a doctorate in higher education from Morgan State University.

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