

# Expanding Support for College in Prison Programs

**HB 5175, 5176, & 5177** will allow Michigan to invest in ALL college students by providing equal access to student financial aid programs whether their classroom is online, on campus, or in prison.

## → Summary

Seven colleges and universities in Michigan have degree or certificate programs for incarcerated students. Four of these are bachelor's degree programs. Students are not charged for enrollment in these programs and most are funded through private grants, institutional funds, as well as limited federal financial aid. Inadequate financial resources create limitations to starting or expanding a degree program in prison is but HB 5175, 5176, & 5177 will change this.

Starting this year, all incarcerated students will be eligible for the full federal Pell Grant as well as four of Michigan's eight student financial aid programs. The Michigan Department of Corrections also has a competitive grant fund available for institutions to start new bachelor's programs. The next step in expending access is to ensure that the remaining four Michigan student financial aid programs are available to incarcerated students. College is college whether the classroom is online, on campus, or in prison.



7

Colleges/Universities with degree programs in prisons in Michigan

842

Students enrolled in prison-based degree and certificate programs

3,000

Current waitlist of potential students waiting to enroll

## → Why does this matter?



### Lower recidivism rate

Individuals who obtain a degree are less likely to become incarcerated again. The average recidivism rate for a high school completer is 55%, but only 5% for those who obtain a bachelor's degree.



### A more educated workforce

Obtaining a bachelor's degree in prison not only reduces the likelihood that a person re-offends but it adds another highly qualified individual to Michigan's workforce. A critical need for the economy.

## → What needs to change?

Michigan has 8 student financial aid programs, only half of which are accessible to students in prison. HB 5175, 5176, and 5177 will make the MTG, MCS, and CVTG available to students in prison. The Michigan Achievement Scholarship (MAS), the state's newest program, will to be updated in the state budget. None of the changes will impact current budgets or require a large state investment, but will have **immeasurable lasting impact.**



Program	Potential Students Eligible	Estimated Annual Funding	Covered by Existing Appropriation?
Michigan Tuition Grant (MTG)	140-200 students	\$400,000-600,000	✓
Michigan Competitive Scholarship (MCS)	~50-75 students	\$75,000-\$120,000	✓
Children of Veteran's Tuition Grant (CVTG)	~20 students	\$56,000	✓
Michigan Achievement Sholarship (MAS)	700-1,300	\$3-\$5 million	✓

# College in Prison: Bachelor's Programs in Michigan

The Michigan Department of Corrections collaborates with seven institutions in Michigan on degree and certificate-granting programs: three community colleges, three independent institutions, and one public university with the potential to add more once the Federal Pell program is expanded. These college in prison programs offer credit-bearing college courses inside prisons that may result in a degree. The partnerships first started in 2015 with the Second Chance Pell initiative. Several public universities and independent colleges and universities are developing bachelor's programs that should be launched in the coming year or two.

Current institution partners at both bachelor's and associate's level include:

- Calvin University
- Hope College
- Siena Heights University
- Eastern Michigan University (new program)
- Delta College
- Jackson College
- Mott Community College



- The longest running in Michigan.
- 41 bachelor's degrees have been granted since the program's inception
- 100 students are currently enrolled



- A liberal arts degree for incarcerated individuals, those enrolled must have long enough left on their sentence to complete the program
- 43 students enrolled



- Leverages transfer partnerships with Michigan's Community Colleges, 3+1 transfer partnership
- Only current bachelor's programs in Michigan for students in prison to receive a Bachelor's of Business Administration (BBA).
- Program approved for Second Chance Pell
- The program was recently expanded from 16 students per cohort to 40 per cohort
- First graduating class (6 students) in 2023



- Only program in a women's prison, Women's Huron Valley.
- 22 student enrolled, with plans to expand
- Newly awarded Second Chance Pell status
- Leverages partnership with Michigan's Community Colleges
- Program offers a Bachelor's of Arts in General Studies



For more info: <https://www.michigan.gov/corrections/offender-success/education>