

Build Dorms, Not Jails!

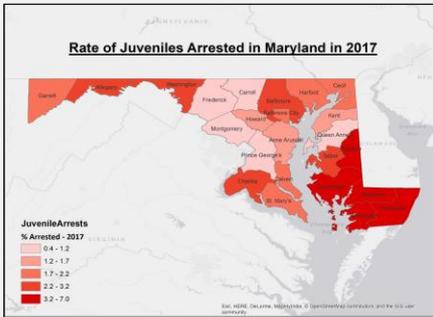
Using Spatial Analysis to Find Locations to Build Dormitories for Maryland's Youth

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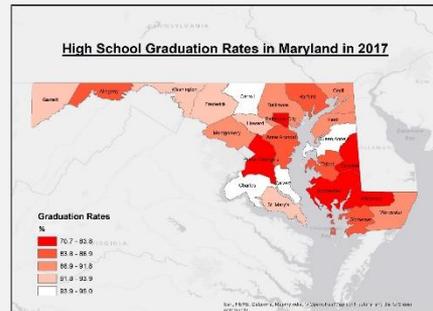
Introduction

In September 2017, the state of Maryland built a \$35 million jail facility to detain teenagers charged with crimes until their trials. The intent was to remedy the practice of housing young defendants alongside adults, in adult jails. A more effective alternative would be to use Maryland funds to house our young people in a college dormitory.



Approach

A study¹ done by Northeastern University showed a correlation between high school dropout rates and juvenile crime. If young people are engaged in positive activities such as school, work or mentoring programs, then they will be less likely to conform to negative influences.



Study Area and Methodology

Maryland has a wide gap of academic achievement. The high school graduation rate of Baltimore City is 70%, whereas Carrol and Queen Anne's counties both have high school graduation rate of 95%, one of the highest rates in the country. The high schools in Carrol County offer both career and technical education and dual enrollment at community college to instill work ethic and earning a high school diploma. Asking a teen to do the right thing when his or her environment is conducive to criminal activity is unrealistic.

What are the 3 best public two-year or trade schools in Maryland near which a dormitory for teens can be built?



Define Analysis Criteria

An analysis was performed to find three optimal locations in Maryland where a dormitory for young people could be built. The optimal locations were based on these factors:

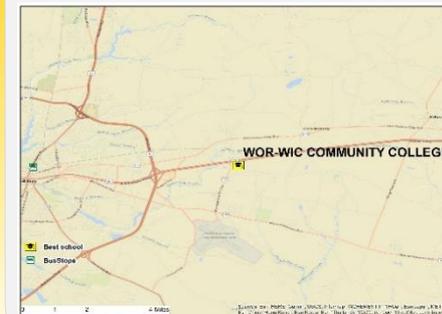
- counties in Maryland with low graduation rates;
- counties in Maryland with a high rate of juvenile arrests;
- proximity to two year public college or trade schools;
- proximity to public transportation.

Recommendations

The top three schools near which to build dormitories are: Baltimore City Community College - Liberty Campus; Prince Georges Community College; and Wor-Wic Community College in Salisbury in the Eastern Shore.



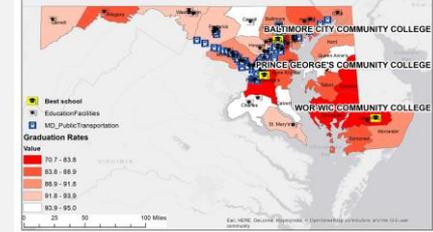
Although public transportation is not close to Wor-Wic Community College, it is still considered a favorable location. Since it is a part of a cluster of counties with both low graduation rates and high juvenile crime rates, more weight was given to those two factors to justify the exception to proximity to public transportation criterion.



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In a dormitory environment², students can receive support that is more conducive to learning. An added benefit of building dorms close to transportation is that Maryland's youth would be able to go to mentoring programs and job interviews. Having a job and a safe place to live are deterrents to crime.

Best Schools Near Which to Build Dormitories



Instead of being reactive by building youth jails, the state of Maryland could be proactive by building housing facilities where teens and young people can live while they attend school. Prevention is often much less expensive than treatment, both monetarily and in other ways. Offering safe housing to young people would be an important step in saving youth from the criminal justice system. Let's build dormitories with the \$35 million, instead of jails.

References

- ¹ See: Center for Labor Market Studies, Northeastern University, Boston Massachusetts, [The Consequences of Dropping Out of High School](#), October 2009
- ² See: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [Neighborhood Effects on Crime and Youth Violence](#), 2009