

# EDUCATION SERVICES

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School districts provided 39,522 students with services at a cost of \$85,887,603 as reported in “Developing Effective Education in Department of Juvenile Justice and other Dropout Prevention Programs,” the FY 2008-09 annual report published by the Florida Department of Education in 2010. An additional \$7,246,619 of Title I, Part D funds allocated to Florida was spent in Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) education programs. In 2009-10, according to OPPAGA Report No. 10-55, this investment was reported at \$63.8 million, a reduction in spending of over \$22 million statewide. Florida Statutes require juvenile justice programs to provide students with pre-employment, job readiness training. In 2010-11, this funding amounted to \$2.3 million which facilitated the earning of industry-recognized certificates by 227 students at seven of Florida’s juvenile justice educational programs.

Section 1003.52(1), Florida Statutes, states, “The Legislature found that education is the single most important factor in the rehabilitation of adjudicated delinquent youth in the custody of Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) programs.” It is the goal of the Legislature that youth in the juvenile justice system are afforded the opportunity to obtain a high-quality education. The Department of Education (DOE) serves as the lead agency for juvenile justice education programs, curriculum, support services, and resources. To this end, DOE and DJJ each designate a coordinator for Juvenile Justice Education Programs to serve as the point-of-contact for resolving issues not addressed by district school boards and to provide each department’s participation in the following activities:

- Training, collaborating, and coordinating with the Department of Juvenile Justice, district school boards, educational contract providers, and juvenile justice providers, whether state-operated or contracted.
- Collecting information on the academic performance of students in juvenile justice programs and reporting on the results.
- Developing academic and career protocols that provide guidance to district school boards and providers in all aspects of educational programming, including records transfer and transition.
- Prescribing the roles of program personnel and interdepartmental district school board or provider collaboration strategies.

The Florida Legislature has been instrumental in Florida’s system of juvenile justice education through statutory mandates leading to rule development within both education and juvenile justice. At a minimum, continuity of educational programming for students is a priority for avoid school failure while experiencing the

juvenile justice system. These students might be temporarily detained in a regional juvenile detention center, a separate juvenile justice prevention program, a day treatment program, or a residential commitment program. Over half the students served by DJJ are in ninth or tenth grade. Of those in residential commitment programs who are 16 years of age or older, 79% are significantly behind in school.

The Department of Juvenile Justice Office of Education works with stakeholders to assist juvenile justice education program administration and operation comply with federal and state legislative mandates. They are able to benefit from available resources, partnerships and opportunities. The Department's strategic plan addresses ongoing academic improvement, as well as, employability readiness. This requires coordination and integration at the direct-service level by responsible school districts, educational providers, community-based care partners, Workforce Florida, Inc., the Agency for Workforce Innovation, and regional workforce boards. This year the Banner Center on CAPE Act Secondary Career Academies provided outreach to over 30 juvenile justice programs resulting in 71 students earning OSHA certification. State-level grants have also facilitated the linking of juvenile justice involved youth with regional workforce board services.

### **Training and Coordination**

During the 2009-10 academic year, 25 of the 151 juvenile justice education programs in Florida operated in regional juvenile detention centers, approximately 84 in residential facilities, and 42 in day treatment programs, which combined state and local school district funding. According to the statewide survey administered in June 2010 by DJJ, there were 676 teachers employed in juvenile justice education programs and approximately 7,000 students served on any given day. Only 91% of the programs reported access to the internet, 24% were approved as GED test sites, and 13% had access to the Florida education channel. Internet access is required by Florida Statutes, which requires state and local district collaboration.

Office of Education personnel provided on-site training to youth and faculty at over 35 sites. This was in addition to facilitating three statewide training events with topics ranging from technology usage, vocational certification, regional workforce boards, children and family services, virtual education, on-line reading programs, credit retrieval, mentoring services, Youth Investment Awards, the Transition Education Network, educational curriculum, interagency collaboration, and Ready to Work certification programs. DJJ works with DOE on collaborative trainings, technical assistance papers, OPPAGA studies and reporting, and, currently, re-inventing the system of accountability.

DJJ representatives also serve on the federally mandated State Advisory Group providing input on data specific to Individuals with Disabilities Education funding. They also participate in scoring competitive grants such as those administered by the Division of Career and Technical Education and by Workforce Florida, Inc. This year, the Office of Education was able to provide DJJ program facilities with training on ArtThread and the Artist in Residence Program administered by USF/FHMI. This was accomplished in conjunction with the Transition Education Network (also known as Project 10) and the University of South Florida's (USF) St. Petersburg campus. Hundreds of careers in the arts are available to individuals; most of the careers are not hindered by a juvenile record.

The following are highlights reported by juvenile justice education programs, which resulted from state and local coordination efforts:

- Evening tutoring
- Use of computer labs for career exploration
- Incentivized PowerPoint presentation contests that focusing on careers
- Science and reducing recidivism
- Robotics programs (sponsored by Florida High School/High Tech)
- Participation in select college and vocational certification programs
- Use of credit retrieval
- Virtual education programs that offer academic credit support toward receiving a high school diploma
- Pensacola Boys Base's (Escambia County) staff and students' County Proclamation for Habitat for Humanity

Many other juvenile justice program students' contributions to their local communities were highlighted in publications throughout the year.

### **Academic Performance**

School districts and/or their contracted providers work continuously to meet the individual needs of each student since programs vary in size, their needs and academic levels are diverse, and expectations are high. OPPAGA Report No. 10-55 noted that student gains are considerable given that most students entering juvenile justice programs are older than their peers, academically behind, and are likely to have had attendance problems at school. Each student must be individually enrolled, academically assessed, given an individualized academic plan, given a course schedule, given individual instruction, and withdrawn upon exiting the program, even within short-term settings such as regional juvenile detention centers. The small nature of the schools requires supplemental funding currently provided through reduced class size FTE funding and is reported to have significantly reduced teacher turnover. Teacher certification requirements remain a challenge when multiple subject areas are required to provide continuity of programming with limited numbers of teachers, particularly in rural settings. In 2008-09, however, most high school students earned at least three credits per semester, the number generally needed to stay on track for high school graduation. Many students earned academic credits at a higher rate. Overall, high school students earned a median of 3.6 credits per semester and a quarter of students earned 5.5 or more credits per semester.

Data from the Florida Department of Education indicate that of the 23% graduating, 51% of youth earned a standard diploma and 49% earned a Florida High School Diploma. Of the 189 students that took the GED test, 97% passed. Standardized FCAT testing indicated 16% of these students scored at level three or above on

reading. Twenty-two percent scored at three or above on math and 90% were promoted to the next grade level. Of the 39,552 students in juvenile justice education programs in 2008-09, 38% were identified as exceptional students. Of this total, 15% were specific learning disabled, 15% emotionally/behaviorally disabled, 3% intellectually disabled, and 2% other health impaired.

Students in all DJJ programs are administered a pre- and post-academic assessment as a result of the statutory mandate to assess student progress while in juvenile justice education programs. These programs are not subject to a school grade. These students have a significant mobility rate and many are placed in programs outside their home districts. The Basic Achievement Skills Inventory, or BASI, is a multi-level assessment that is norm referenced and was developed to help identify a student's academic strengths and weaknesses. The BASI covers grades 3-12 and content areas of reading, language arts, and math. According to the DOE 2008-09 BASI results (Data Source: Survey 5), half (50%) of the 4,203 students with valid pre- and post-tests achieved meaningful growth in math. Meaningful gains are based upon the statistical criteria of the test. The results also showed 55% of the 4,208 students with valid pre- and post-tests achieved meaningful growth in reading.

In compliance with Juvenile Justice Rule 63B-1.001 requiring designation of juvenile justice education programs' ability to offer employability preparation, a statewide survey was distributed to lead teachers throughout Florida in June 2010. Results from the 136 or 89% of the total pool of respondents indicated:

- 3,996 students were over age for the grade
- 1,576 participated in a credit retrieval programs
- 138 students were taking Florida virtual high school courses
- 187 students were enrolled in distance learning courses

Of those students eligible for high school completion, respondents indicated:

- 156 earned a standard high school diploma
- 665 earned a GED
- 24 earned a special diploma

The results showed 180 college credits were earned by students in juvenile justice facilities, either through parental payment, provider donation, or funding from the Eckerd Family Foundation's creation of the Youth Investment Award in partnership with the Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation. As of June 2010, 44 students in juvenile justice education programs were attending college online.

The Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation administers the Youth Investment Award, which was created by a grant from the Eckerd Family Foundation. Approximately 300 youth have received financial assistance since initiation of the program, directly contributing to youth education or employment needs. Awards include assistance with GED testing fees, acquisition of birth certificates, state identification cards, bus passes, and tools essential to employment, uniforms, temporary lodging and registration/tuition fees. Youth earning their

high school diploma no longer earn education funds within commitment programs. During CY 2009-10, 44 students were enrolled in college education with 180 credits being earned while in a DJJ facility.

Highlights reported by programs included recidivism data as low as 7% and many program graduates' success stories. For example, a 2008 graduate of a G4S program in Okeechobee County received his A.S. from PBCC. He graduated cum laude and was accepted into the University of Central Florida's Mechanical, Materials, and Aerospace Engineering Program. Another graduate was accepted into St. Paul's College in West Virginia. And, a third graduate matriculated to Baptist College of Health Sciences. One program reported two graduates enrolled in college courses at Florida State Community College in Jacksonville this past summer. The Collier County Juvenile Detention Center also initiated opportunities for students to begin the process of returning to the general education programs offered within their respective communities.

### **Career Protocols**

The Office of Education focuses on maximizing youth academic success and preparing for employability. A paper titled "Enhancing the Employability of Juvenile Justice Involved Youth" was developed and distributed. It cited examples of grants awarded from Workforce Florida, Inc., Strengthening Youth Opportunities Committee, as well as, the Department's utilization of Ready to Work resources and Perkins funding. DJJ also collaborated with the Department of Education on two technical assistance papers published during 2010 related to curricular flexibility and career and technical education.

In response to the need for youth to acquire basic identification documents essential for employability, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) implemented this year with the Department of Health provided select department personnel with the ability to procure a youth's birth certificate if it was unavailable from a parent. Information is on the Web site and has already proven beneficial for youth in the custody of the Department whose parents are deceased or incarcerated. With the implementation of Rule 63B-1.006, which required residential programs to provide students with documentation essential to employability prior to exiting the program, it was reported that personnel facilitated the acquisition of identification for 658 students in juvenile justice education programs during the 2009-10 school year.

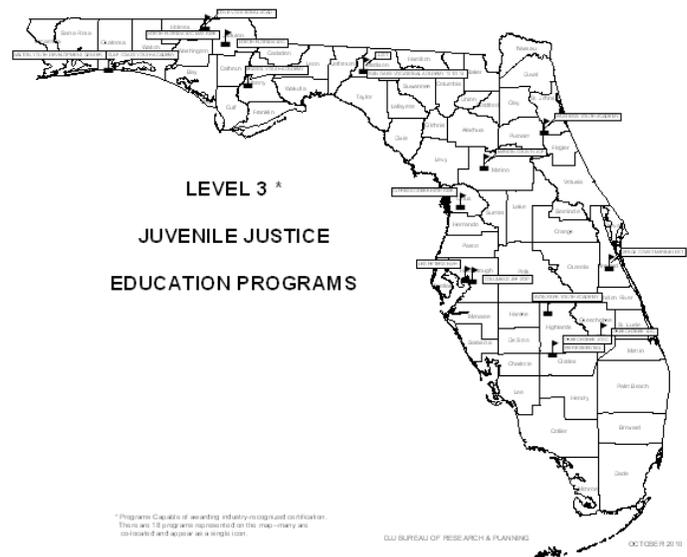
A MOU was also implemented with the Banner Center on CAPE Act Secondary Career Academies, administered by Florida State University/Learning System Institute through a contract with Workforce Florida, Inc. The opportunity to offer OSHA certifications in over 30 DJJ residential programs demonstrates the "above and beyond" willingness of teachers to work creatively within education and juvenile justice scheduling to provide youth with this opportunity. Programs are exploring becoming Career Academies with several piloting new partnerships, processes, and access to online education this year.

The Florida Legislature allocated funding for the Ready to Work program during the past three years to provide individuals with a credential that demonstrates his/her ability to enter the workforce with the skills needed to succeed. Pre- and post-instruction assessments are used to identify specific skills that indicate a

competence level to enter the workforce at an entry-level position or above. It also provides targeted instruction in the specific employability skill(s) for which mastery has not been demonstrated. Since being allocated by the Florida legislature, 1,207 juvenile justice-involved students have taken a Ready to Work assessment, with 289 total credentials earned (106 Bronze, 162 Silver, and 21 Gold).

Florida Statute §985.622 requires DJJ to participate in an annual review of Florida's Multiagency Vocational Plan for Juvenile Justice Programs. Under this statute, vocational programs offered in DJJ facilities are divided into three (3) specific categories contingent upon their pre-employability training capacity. Level 1 programs are identified as providing basic skill sets such as following directions, working well with others, completing tasks, etc. Level 2 includes career exploration and Type 3 provides for actual credentialing, requiring a greater length of time and instructor certification. The Department of Education contributes to the development of Level 3 programs with annual awards of Carl D. Perkins grants submitted by responsible school districts. During CY 2009-10, approximately 2,945 students received vocational training, with 1,251 earning vocational certificates. This was a significant increase from 2008-09 during which juvenile justice students earned 227 such certificates, according to OPPAGA Report No. 10-55, October 2010. Thirteen youth were awarded industry certificates by Twin Oaks Juvenile Development, Inc. and 214 awarded by Home Builders Institute. Approximately 100 vocational teachers, of which 67 were teachers with industry certifications, were employed in DJJ facilities. As of June 2010:

- 25 (or 100%) of all regional juvenile detention centers were reported as Level 1 programs: teaching personal accountability skills, behaviors appropriate for youth in all age groups and ability levels, and work habits that help maintain employment and living standards, also referred to as Soft Skills.
- 113 programs, constituting 115 (or 86%) of responding programs, incorporate Level 1 and 2 programming, which add orientation to career choices, personal abilities, aptitudes, and interests. These programs offer youth the opportunity to explore and gain knowledge of occupational options, and an understanding of the effort required to achieve success in such occupations. Of these, 95 are currently limited to Level 2, which are not yet able to offer industry-recognized certification.
- 18 (or 16%) of 112 residential commitment programs reported Level 3 program status, which incorporates Level 1 and 2 content and vocational competencies/prerequisites needed for entry into a specific occupation. These programs offer industry recognized occupational completion points and/or articulation agreements in place of continuity of educational initiatives.



- Partnerships with Workforce Florida, Inc. have resulted in over \$6 million in funds specific for the needs of court-involved youth, including academic remediation, pre-employability skill development, résumé completion, and workplace readiness. Court-involved youth include both dependents and delinquents. Approximately 559 students received services from regional workforce boards or Workforce Florida, Inc. grants during 2009-10.

The Department of Education, in partnership with the Department of Juvenile Justice, also included incorporation of the Ready to Work initiative as a prerequisite within the DOE administered Perkins grants specific to juvenile justice education programs. The Department of Education awarded \$450,000 in grants for the 2010-11 school year which included:

PROJECT AWARDS				
Department of Juvenile Justice 2010-2011			Total Amount	TAPS Number
			\$450,000.00	11B010
Agency	DJJ Site	Focus Areas	Project Number	Amount Recommended
Charlotte School District	Crossroads Wilderness Institute (CWI)	Energy	080-1611A-1CJJ1	\$72,456.00
Liberty School District	Liberty JUST	Architecture and Construction	390-1611A-1CJJ2	\$75,000.00
Okaloosa School District	Okaloosa Youth Academy and Okaloosa Development Center	Information Technology	460-1611A-1CJJ1	\$67,550.00
Okeechobee School District	Tantie Juvenile Residential Facility	Arts, AV Technology and Communications	470-1611A-1CJJ1	\$75,000.00
Pasco School District	Pasco Girls Academy	Information Technology	510-1611A-1CJJ1	\$62,906.00
Polk School District	Avon Park Youth Development Center	Architecture and Construction	530-1611A-1CJJ1	\$25,088.00
St. Johns School District	Youth Services International, Inc	Arts, AV Technology and Communications	550-1611A-1CJJ1	\$72,000.00
			<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>\$450,000.00</b>

In addition to academic progress, earned diplomas and certificates, highlights reported by individual programs included implementing mastery-based instruction, improving student behavior modification, upgrading technology, providing increased opportunities for hands-on learning (e.g., lab experiments), addressing multiple learning modalities, group instruction leading to individual instruction, summer programs integrating science, marine-related careers, and first-aid lifesaving skills.

Bay Detention's education department embarked on the third year of their Gardening Project. The youth participate in all facets of growing food that is then donated to the local rescue mission. A community volunteer conducts a cake decorating class with both female and male students. The educational department invites various speakers from the community to speak to the youth regarding careers and education. Alachua Regional Juvenile Detention Center developed a hydroponic program growing seasonal vegetables with local approval to incorporate products into the meal plan as well as initiating a Television Production program. Other residential programs reported student participation in seed germination and gardening process classes. A lead teacher was also recognized as Correctional Education Association Southeast U.S. Region VIII Teacher of the Year.

## Collaboration Strategies

Partnerships with Workforce Florida, Inc. and regional workforce boards have increased following the lead of the federal Shared Youth Vision and Florida's Strengthening Youth Partnership. The value of the investment by the Florida Banner Center of Secondary Career Academies at the Learning Systems Institute of Florida State University that resulted in 71 students earning OSHA certification is estimated at a value of \$23,075. This is in addition to the student pride for their completion of a credential, resulting in reduced liability and workman's compensation costs to the prospective hiring employer. As a follow-up, 15 programs were invited to register to become CAPE Career Academies allowing students to earn an industry recognized credential while pursuing a high school diploma. Students who successfully graduate with both a high school diploma and an industry recognized credential receive 3 college credits for every industry recognized certificate completed while at the CAPE Career Academy. In addition, a performance bonus is returned directly to the educational program upon the youth's completion of high school.

Reported community service projects include farms, auctions, and fundraisers. Monthly "bees" in spelling, math, and social studies bring out a positive competitive spirit as do options of night school credit recovery, virtual schooling, and poster contests on career awareness, mock interview contests, and volunteerism. Teens Reaching Animals In Need (TRAIN) Program is in place in Hillsborough County teaching young men how to care and train for neglected dogs to rehabilitate them for adoption. After becoming a Florida Ready To Work school offering career training and preparation, one program started an after school program that runs 4 days a week for 3 hours each day. Students receive additional one-on-one academic help, vocational skills building, academic remediation, and test preparation (GED, ACT, SAT, FCAT). Staff members also help students apply for financial aid from the Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation's Youth Achievement Award for GED testing and vocational programs.