

# EDUCATION SERVICES

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The Florida Legislature determined that education is the single most important factor in the rehabilitation of adjudicated delinquent youth and stated: "*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 mission of the DJJ Office of Education is to support this goal by providing professional training to all education stakeholders; supporting realistic and relevant academic and pre-employment curricula for DJJ student clients; and maximizing the resources that support DJJ educational initiatives. The Office of Education accomplishes this mission by focusing on the three educational objectives listed in the Department's Strategic Plan:

- Develop and implement accountability measures to ensure that youth who are placed in the custody of the department attain measurable academic improvement, and when appropriate, learn a vocational skill that will help the youth acquire employment following release from department supervision.
- Increase opportunities for industry-recognized certification of youth in residential programs.
- Establish multi-agency collaboration in the delivery of education services for at-risk youth.

The Office of Education works to support these objectives with myriad stakeholders including youth, families, Department and contracted education and program personnel, district school boards, the Department of Education (DOE), Workforce Florida, Inc., regional workforce boards, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation. Cross-program training is ongoing to facilitate access of juvenile justice-involved youth to available resources, partnerships, and opportunities.

The Florida Legislature stipulates that DOE and DJJ serve as the point of contact for resolving issues not addressed by district school boards and to provide each Department's participation in four primary areas:

- Training
- Academic Performance
- Career Counseling
- Collaboration

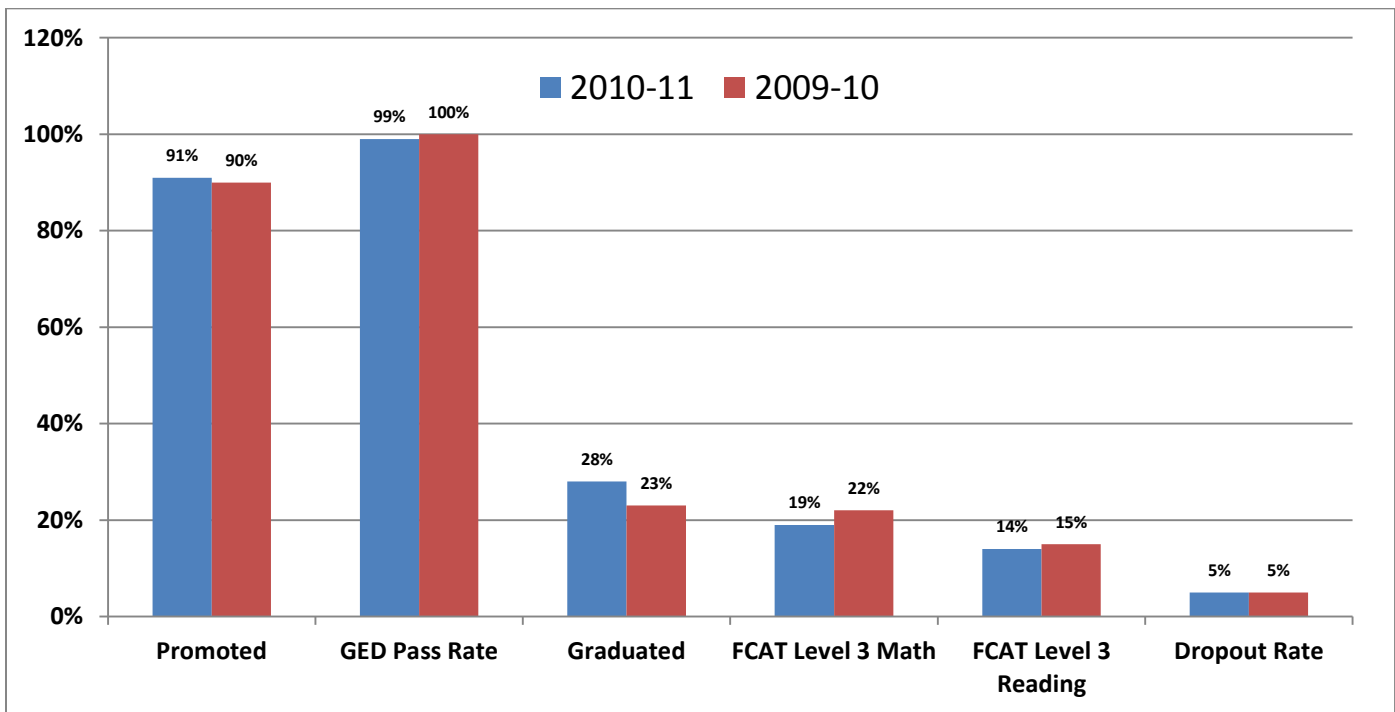
## Training

Representatives of the Office of Education provide training and technical assistance to stakeholders and partners throughout the year. Assistance is provided by telephone, e-mail, web site information, site visits, regional meetings, and statewide training events.

**Academic Performance**

Florida Statutes and the Florida Administrative Code support academic success by requiring continuity of educational programming for students in juvenile detention centers, day treatment programs, and residential commitment settings. DJJ educational programs are designed to meet the unique educational needs of each student, half of whom are in ninth or tenth grade and more than 25% are significantly behind in school. In 2010-2011, 32,864 students enrolled in juvenile justice education programs and 7,803 students participated for at least 50% of the prescribed length of the program. The following exhibit depicts key outcome data for those students.

**Key Juvenile Justice Education Indicators  
FY 2009-10 and FY 2010-11**



Source: Department of Education 2012 Annual Dropout Prevention Report

Students in DJJ residential and day treatment programs took the Basic Achievement Skills Inventory (BASI) entry and exit assessments that address math, reading, and language arts. BASI student outcome data include having a valid entry and exit assessment record and demonstrating meaningful growth, i.e., the learning gains a student makes between the entry and exit scores. In FY 2010-11, 57% of 2,714 students demonstrated meaningful growth in math and 59% of 2,722 students demonstrated meaningful growth in reading, an increase of approximately 4% over the previous year.

Students who have earned their diplomas also have opportunities to pursue post-secondary education while in the programs. According to annual survey responses, The Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation and several providers assisted more than 220 students enrolled in on-line state college courses while in commitment.

## Career Counseling

The Office of Education works diligently to enhance and expand Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, identify and procure documents essential for employment, and bolster the transition process to increase employment opportunities for DJJ students.

*Vocational Program Levels:* The Office of Education works with 130 education and training programs within prevention, detention, day treatment, and residential facilities. Since the average stay in a detention facility is approximately 10 days, there is minimal participation in CTE programs. CTE programs are primarily associated with the 108 residential and day treatment programs and are reported as one of three levels:

- Level 1: Pre-vocational includes counseling or instruction contributing to personal accountability skills and behaviors appropriate for age groups and ability levels that lead to good work habits.
- Level 2: Incorporates Level 1 competencies and provides an orientation to a broad scope of career choices, based upon personal abilities, aptitudes and interests, and exploring and gaining knowledge of occupation options and the level of effort required to achieve them.
- Level 3: Incorporates the first and second levels and is able to provide recognized industry prerequisites for attaining recognized points of completion within particular trades or vocations.

Level 3 programs offer certifications in more than twenty different areas, including, but not limited to, automotive repair, book keeping, carpentry, culinary arts, digital design, information technology, and welding. While the small size of the juvenile justice education programs makes it difficult to include a full time CTE instructor, many have worked to include work experience, readiness and certification opportunities. For example, Home Builders Institute provides career and technical training to at-risk and adjudicated youth at eight sites throughout Florida. These programs receive funding through the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice. Outcomes for 2011 include:

- 225 participants earned Pre-Apprentice Certificate Training (PACT) certificates.
- 191 participants were eligible for placement.
- 176 participants were placed in a job, military, or school.
- 213 participants that earned a PACT certificate did not re-offend during follow up, representing a 94.6% non-recidivism rate.
- \$8.18 average wage at placement.
- 92% placement rate for graduates.

*Financial Grants:* The U.S. Department of Education provides federal funds, i.e., Perkins Grants, to develop more fully the academic, career, and technical skills of students who elect to enroll in career and technical programs. As shown in the following exhibit, grants totaling \$450,000 were awarded to nine programs for FY 2012-13.

### 2011 Perkins Grants Awarded to DJJ Educational Program

Agency	DJJ Site	Focus Area	Amount
Polk School District	Avon Park Youth Development Center	Architecture & Construction	\$ 49,861.42
Liberty School District	Liberty Juvenile Unit for Specialized Treatment	Architecture & Construction	\$ 70,000.00
Duval School District	Duval Halfway House	Architecture & Construction	\$ 34,935.00
DeSoto School District	Spring Lake Youth Academy	Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources	\$ 30,572.91
St. Johns School District	St. Johns Juvenile Correctional	Information Technology	\$ 70,000.00
Okeechobee School District	Cypress Juvenile Residential Facility	Business Management & Administration	\$ 40,645.00
St. Johns School District	Hastings Youth Academy	Business Management & Administration	\$ 54,932.41
Okeechobee School District	Okeechobee Juvenile Offender Corrections Center	Information Technology	\$ 70,000.00
Volusia School District	Daytona Juvenile Residential Facility	Business Management & Administration Information Technology	\$ 29,053.26
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$450,000</b>

The Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation (FJJF) is a not-for-profit corporation and a direct-support organization for DJJ. The Foundation assists students, their parents, and citizens by promoting delinquency prevention, intervention and educational opportunities for youth. The Foundation manages the Youth Investment Award Scholarship Program. The awards may be used for tuition, equipment, supplies, transportation, education or employability assistance. The Office of Education assists youth, families and the FJJF Director in processing the Youth Investment Award. In Fiscal Year 2011-12, more than \$21,000 dollars were contributed to support education or employability skills training for 96 students.

The Florida Legislature allocated funding for the Ready to Work program to allow qualified individuals the opportunity to earn credentials that demonstrate the 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 allocated by the Florida legislature in the fall of 2007, 6,247 DJJ students took a Ready to Work assessment and 1,784 students earned a Gold, Silver, or Bronze credential. In 2011, DJJ students earned the following credentials

- 26 Gold
- 170 Silver
- 158 Bronze

## Collaboration

The Department successfully collaborated with federal, state and local agencies and was awarded several grants to fund vocational programs in residential commitment programs. For example:

- The Department applied for a grant offered by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance to fund technology training programs in the four state's highest risk male and female facilities. The Department was awarded approximately \$297,000 and the steps to implement the program are currently underway.
- The Department partnered with the Palm Beach and Hillsborough School Districts to establish vocational training programs at two residential commitment facilities. Funded by federal Juvenile Accountability Block Grants, participating students will have the opportunity to earn industry recognized Microsoft Office Specialist certificates.
- The Department has engaged with the University of Maryland, Center for Educational Excellence in Alternative Setting. The Center will review current policies; provide recommendations based on research and best practices; provide technical assistance and training site-visits to several schools; and develop an action plan to improve Juvenile Justice School performance over the next three years.