

EDUCATION SERVICES

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The Florida Legislature determined that education is one of the most important factors 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 training to all education stakeholders; supporting realistic and relevant academic and pre-employment curricula for students in DJJ programs; and maximizing the resources that support DJJ educational initiatives. The Office of Education accomplishes this mission by focusing on the following educational objectives:

- 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 career education 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 a myriad of stakeholders including youth, families, the Department and contracted education and program personnel, district school boards, the Department of Education (DOE), Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), CareerSource Florida, regional workforce boards, the Department of Children and Families (DCF), and the Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation (FJJF). In 2013-2014, 18,441 students enrolled in juvenile justice day treatment, detention, prevention, and residential education programs.

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 Education
- 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.

DJJ hosted a statewide transition training in June 2015 for reform specialists, appropriate probation staff, and all school district and residential program educational representatives that complete students electronic educational exit plans (EEEPs). Over 100 participants joined together in Orlando for a two day training that included topics such as EEEP development and uses, barriers to successful student transition, DJJ transitional service contracts, and community reentry team meetings. Guest speakers from Project Bridge, Project Connect, SEDNET, and Career Source shared information with the participants and various school districts were selected to share best practices.

Academic Performance

Florida Statutes and the Florida Administrative Code supports academic success by requiring continuity of educational programming for students in juvenile detention centers, prevention, 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.

Section 1003.52(3)(b), F.S., requires the FDOE, with the assistance of school districts, to select a common student assessment instrument and protocol for measuring student learning gains and student progression while a student is in a juvenile justice education program. During the 2013-14 school year, WIN Learning, in partnership with Florida Ready to Work, provided school districts with a common entry and exit assessment in reading and math. Students in DJJ residential and day treatment programs are administered the common entry and exit assessment. Of the students who completed an entry and exit assessment the percentage of students who demonstrated learning gains on the common assessment were 28.8 percent for reading and 46.2 percent for math.

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. Florida Ready to Work also provides targeted instruction in the specific employability skill(s) for which mastery has not been demonstrated. In 2014-15, DJJ students earned 472 Florida Ready to Work credentials in the following categories:

- 44 Gold
- 255 Silver
- 173 Bronze

Additionally, students spent 2,154.5 hours completing Ready to Work courseware.

Students served in DJJ programs have access to the appropriate courses and instruction to prepare them for the General Educational Development (GED) test. Students in DJJ programs can enroll in GED preparation courses and still receive K-12 funding in the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP). GED preparation consists of adult education courses designed to prepare individuals at a ninth grade level or above to successfully complete the GED subject area tests leading to qualification for a State of Florida high school

diploma. DJJ schools reported that in Fiscal Year 2014-15, 242 students earned GEDs, 147 students earned standard diplomas, and 6 students earned special diplomas.

Students who have earned their diplomas also have opportunities to pursue post-secondary education while in the programs. According to 2015 annual survey responses, the Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation and several providers assisted 42 students with enrollment in college courses. Those students earned 296 college credits while in commitment.

Career Education

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. DJJ schools reported that more than 4,909 students participated in CTE programs during Fiscal Year 2014-2015.

Vocational Program Types: The Office of Education works with education and training programs within prevention, detention, day treatment, and residential facilities. Since the average stay in a detention facility is approximately 11 days, there is minimal participation in CTE programs. CTE programs are primarily associated with residential and day treatment programs and are reported as one of three types:

- Type 1: Programs that teach personal accountability skills and behaviors that are appropriate for students in all age groups and ability levels and that lead to work habits that help maintain employment and living standards.
- Type 2: Programs that include Type 1 program content and an orientation to the broad scope of career choices, based upon personal abilities, aptitudes, and interests. Exploring and gaining knowledge of occupation options and the level of effort required to achieve them is an essential prerequisite to skill training.
- Type 3: Programs that include Type 1 program content and the competencies or the prerequisites needed for entry into a specific occupation.

Type 3 programs may offer certifications in numerous areas, including, but not limited to culinary arts, carpentry, welding, Building Tech/Auto Technology/NCCER, C-Tech Telecommunications, Building Ground Maintenance, and Information Technology. From the 4,909 DJJ students who participated in CTE courses in FY 2014-2015, 1,173 industry recognized certifications were earned.

In addition, Home Builders Institute provides career and technical training to at-risk and adjudicated youth at nine sites throughout Florida. These programs receive funding through the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice. Outcomes for 2014-2015 include:

- 229 participants earned Pre-Apprentice Certificate Training (PACT) certificates;
- 81% of the participants graduated;
- 179 participants were eligible for placement;
- 87 participants were placed in a job, military, or school;
- \$8.65 average wage at placement;
- 49% placement rate for graduates; and

- Participants saved tax payers an estimated \$183,260 by contributing 22,942 community service hours. The community service included maintaining, repairing, remodeling, and constructing state buildings and properties, saving approximately \$2 million since 1997 by HBI Florida students.

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 are enrolled in career and technical programs. As shown in the following exhibit, grants totaling \$414,000 were awarded to seven programs for FY 2015-16.

Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Secondary Career and Technical Education Programs Department of Juvenile Justice Students			
Agency	DJJ Site	Focus Area	Amount
Bay School District	AMIKids Panama City	Carpentry	\$7,825
Citrus School District	Cypress Creek Academy	Building Construction Technology	\$30,000
Desoto School District	Spring Lake Youth Academy	Culinary Arts	\$ 40,949
Marion School District	Marion Youth Academy	Information Technology	\$46,322
Okeechobee School District	Cypress Juvenile Residential Facility	Building Construction Technology	\$34,583
Palm Beach School District	Palm Beach Juvenile Correctional Facility	Information Technology	\$62,753
Polk School District	Highlands Youth Academy	Information Technology	\$64,400
St Johns School District	Hastings Youth Academy	Information Technology	\$39,600
St. Johns School District	St. Johns Juvenile Residential Facility	Information Technology	\$47,898
Volusia School District	Alternative Education Facility	Agriculture	\$39,670
TOTAL			\$414,000

Source: Florida Department of Education Career and Adult Education

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 2014-2015, \$4,393.75 was contributed to support education or employability skills training for students.

Collaboration

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

- The Office of Education received the Second Chance Act Grant, offered by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, and the Bureau of Justice Assistance to establish and provide technology career training programs to prepare Florida's highest risk male and female juvenile offenders. The training program focuses on technology-based jobs and careers that will maximize the student's ability to achieve employment and pay restitution. Labs were set up in four facilities throughout the state and teachers were trained to teach the Microsoft Office Specialist Program including Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. Students worked towards earning certification in each program depending on their ability level and length of stay. Five students passed the certification exam by the end of the grant but this project is ongoing since the equipment has been provided for the labs and the curriculum has been purchased. Youth in the four selected facilities across the state can continue to access the Microsoft training programs as long as the teacher who was trained remains at the program and the facility continues to use the current Microsoft curriculum. Although not as many youth completed the certification program and became employed as initially anticipated, the Office of Education is projecting an increase in the number of graduates with industry recognized certifications in the future due to the low costs of sustainability for this grant. Regional workforce boards can assist these students with reentry and employment support post-release.
- The Office of Education received a JABG grant to provide students with nationally recognized vocational training and hands-on training in the construction trades industry. The curriculum and certification is provided by the National Center for Construction and Education Research (NCCER) Foundation and Paxton-Patterson. The specific objectives of the program are to provide NCCER Core Curriculum Certification to students who satisfy all course requirements and provide hands-on training in reading blueprints, setting tile, using hand tools, and installing communication systems e.g. cable, Internet, telephone, and security systems. This grant has provided 56 students with NCCER certifications so far. In addition DJJ Education provided funding for a NCCER instructor to become an Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) trainer and 14 students at this program earned their OSHA cards this school year.
- The Department continues to partner with The Center for Educational Excellence in Alternative Settings. The Center reviews current policies; provides recommendations based on research and best practices; provides technical assistance and training; and conducts site-visits to several schools to develop action plans to improve Juvenile Justice School performance. CEEAS worked with four Okeechobee residential programs over the past year on improving student engagement strategies. Teachers at each program are now implementing project based learning on a regular basis. For the 2015-2016 school year CEEAS is assisting DJJ with the administration and analysis of student climate surveys in all residential programs and providing joint collaboration training for education and facility

staff and leaders in the south region. These trainings focus on building and sustaining strong working relationships, embedding shared values into school culture, sharing classroom expectations for educators and youth care workers, and supporting positive student behavior. Sites are creating mutual accountability teams that include facility and education staff.