

# 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 2014-2015, 18,420 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 regional transition brainstorming sessions in May and June 2016 for commitment managers, appropriate probation staff, and all school district DJJ transition contacts that complete students electronic

educational exit plans (EEEPs) prior to student's return to their county. Over 120 participants joined together in Chipley, Fort Lauderdale, Orlando, and Gainesville to review current education transition practices and to brainstorm ideas to ensure representatives from the sending school district are involved in transition planning prior to the student being placed in a commitment program. Follow-up conference calls within each region will determine the new process. Based on feedback from the school districts, trainings will be scheduled to ensure state-wide implementation of the new process.

## 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 2014-15 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 49.5 percent for reading and 50.3 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, the numbers of DJJ students that earned Florida Ready to Work credentials decreased significantly (from 472 to 51 in one year) because the program was vetoed and therefore not free anymore. Since the programs had to pay there were only 51 Florida Ready to Work credentials in the following categories:

- 1 Gold
- 30 Silver
- 20 Bronze

Additionally, students spent 815.4 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 2015-16, 317 students earned GEDs, 300 students earned standard diplomas, and 3 students earned special diplomas.

Students who have earned their diplomas also have opportunities to pursue post-secondary education while in the programs. According to 2016 annual survey responses, DJJ students earned 173 college credits while in commitment this year.

### **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 5,609 students participated in CTE programs during Fiscal Year 2015-2016.

*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 5,609 DJJ students who participated in CTE courses in FY 2015-2016, 2,284 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 2015-2016 include:

- 191 participants earned Pre-Apprentice Certificate Training (PACT) certificates;
- 89% of the participants graduated;
- 186 participants were eligible for placement;
- 111 participants were placed in a job, military, or school;
- \$9.16 average wage at placement;
- 60% placement rate for graduates; and

- Participants saved tax payers an estimated \$151,839 by contributing 18,862 community service hours. The community service included maintaining, repairing, remodeling, and constructing state buildings and properties, saving approximately \$2,152,000 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 2016-2017.

<b>Carl D. Perkins                      Career and Technical Education                      Secondary Career and Technical Education Programs                      Department of Juvenile Justice Students</b>			
Agency	DJJ Site	Focus Area	Amount
Liberty School District	Liberty Juvenile Unit for Specialized Treatment	Welding	\$64,400
Marion School District	Marion Youth Academy	Information Technology	\$64,393
Martin School District	Martin Girls Academy	Hospitality and Tourism	\$60,888
Palm Beach School District	Palm Beach Juvenile Correctional Facility	Information Technology	\$62,700
Polk School District	Highlands Youth Academy	Building Construction Technology	\$60,393
Volusia School District	Daytona Residential Juvenile Facility	Agriscience	\$36,826
Washington School District	Okeechobee Youth Corrections Center	Building Construction Technology	\$64,400
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$414,000</b>

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 2015-2016, \$ 4,854.04 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 a Justice Accountability Block Grant (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 122 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 42 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 all south region residential programs over the past year to train education and facility staff through a Mutual Accountability Team (MAT) process. 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. Each south region's MAT is expected to meet regularly to discuss school culture and conduct walk-throughs to observe and discuss the classroom environment, effectiveness of the classroom teachers, student engagement, and youth care staff roles within the classroom. For the 2016-2017 school year CEEAS is assisting DJJ with the administration and analysis of student climate surveys in all residential programs.