



EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Over 150,000 students a year are referred to the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) with approximately 16,000 students served within juvenile justice schools ranging from prevention, intervention, detention, residential and/or post-commitment program services. The state provides oversight through juvenile justice education quality assurance, school district designated transition contacts, and annual review of all juvenile justice cooperative agreements and contracts by the Department of Education (DOE).

Each juvenile justice educational program has a separate school number, budget, enrollment, and exit requirement similar to other publicly funded schools in the district. Requirements for juvenile justice education are specified in Section 1003.52, Florida Statutes and Rule 6A-6.05281, Florida Administrative Code. Accountability includes data and progress monitoring, published quality assurance reports, and annual reports to the Florida Legislature by the Florida Department of Education and Department of Juvenile Justice.

The partnerships between public school districts and the Department provide for a variety of models throughout the continuum of services provided to juvenile justice involved youth. Regional Juvenile Detention Centers, for example, have teachers assigned from the local public school district. The majority of the PACE Centers for Girls and Associated Marine Institutes employ teachers with contracted school district funds allowing for an integrated team approach and consistent professional development. Residential programs may have contracted educational services or teachers provided by the local school system. Each of these programs is a separate school with continuity of youth education as a consistent theme with related educational standards, monitoring and reporting.

As stated in statute, the Florida Legislature finds that education is the single most important factor in the rehabilitation of adjudicated delinquent youth in the custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) programs. It is the goal of the Legislature that youth in the juvenile justice system be 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 education programming, including records transfer and transition.
- Prescribing the roles of program personnel and interdepartmental district school board or provider collaboration strategies.

Key Performance Areas

In September of 2007, Governor Charlie Crist identified education as one of six key performance categories. The Governor's Education goal is to "Provide quality learning opportunities for Florida students through resources and accountability." The Office of Educational Development's (OED) included within the Department of Juvenile Justice addresses Governor Crist's education goal through support of quality education throughout the youth's involvement in the juvenile justice system.

The State of Florida's education goals include high school graduation rate, student performance, school performance, secondary education, and class size/ education funding. There are approximately two hundred self-contained juvenile justice education programs in Florida covered under Section 1003.52, Florida Statutes. These include those within community-based prevention programs, day treatment programs, detention centers and residential commitment programs.

Graduation Rate

The Department of Education and Department of Juvenile Justice produce an annual report as required by the Florida Legislature. This report, entitled *Developing Effective Education in Department of Juvenile Justice and Other Dropout Prevention Programs*, juvenile justice programs were reported to have a graduation rate of 12%. This does not take into account a student withdrawing and earning their high school equivalency diploma. A survey of programs administered by the Department of Juvenile Justice in December 2005 indicated almost 819 students had earned their high school diploma by passing the General Education Diploma while in a juvenile justice school during the 2005 calendar year.

Student Performance

The *Developing Effective Education in Department of Juvenile Justice and Other Dropout Prevention Programs* report also indicated that in 2005-06, 16,040 students participated in a juvenile justice education program for at least 50% of the prescribed length of the program. Outcomes data for these students reveal:

- 89% were promoted
- 13% scored at level 3 or higher on FCAT reading
- 19% scored at level 3 or higher on FCAT math
- 94% students taking the GED tests passed (29% of these students earned a standard diploma and 71% of these students earned a State of Florida diploma)
- 36% were employed in fall 2005; for juvenile justice program completers, the employment rate was 50%; for dropouts, the rate was 26%.

School Performance

Of two hundred juvenile justice educational programs with varying lengths of participation and a mobile student population, two schools were eligible to report achievement of Annual Yearly Progress (AYP): Big Cypress Wilderness Institute and Gulf Coast Youth Academy.

Post-High School Education

- 14% pursued post-secondary education
- 64% of these students found employment and continued their education

The Florida Education & Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) also tracks juvenile justice student involvement with quarterly reports based upon social security numbers reported to the Department of Education. According to their Fall 2005 Findings, youth attending post-secondary education, employed or a combination of both indicated lower rates of recidivism than the statewide average of 40%.

Class Size/Education Funding

DJJ students are grouped within juvenile justice programs based upon gender, level of juvenile justice system involvement, academic levels and size within environmental and personnel limitations. The diversity of student needs in juvenile justice programs requires dedicated statewide and local school district support. The Department of Education reported a 49% turnover of educational personnel in the 2005 annual report produced by the Juvenile Justice Educational Enhancement Program (JJEPP). Juvenile Justice educational programs are subject to the same requirements of public schools with additional requirements as a result of separate legislation and State Board of Education rules. Youth are provided with education up to 250 days a year. All students have an individualized education plan. The limited number of teachers and diversity of instructional requirements is difficult for small programs. Students are assessed for academic status, vocational interests, and, in programs serving students beyond ninety days, results of pre and post-academic assessments are reported to the Department of Education.

Students in juvenile justice programs were included under the dropout prevention and academic intervention statute, Section 1003.53, Florida Statutes and Rule 6A-6.0528, Florida Administrative Code; Youth Services Programs rule, until April 16, 2000; and implementation of Rule 6A-6.05281, Florida Administrative Code, following amendments to Section 1003.52, Florida Statutes. A fiscal impact study implemented in 2001, documented the need for increased allocations for juvenile justice education programs. After elimination of separately weighted dropout prevention funding, a “hold harmless” provision has remained in effect for the last eight years in an attempt to provide for the fiscal needs unique to the juvenile justice educational programs. The Legislature responded to the need for an increase due to rising costs of education during the 2006 legislative session with an allocation specific to juvenile justice educational programs. Funds were allocated using a base student allocation of \$4,163.47 for the FEFP. A supplemental allocation factor of \$944.19 per student was also allocated to juvenile justice education programs where appropriate. If a school district provided incentive funding for teachers to work in a failing school, then an equal incentive bonus was provided to teachers teaching in juvenile justice facilities. A full copy of the appropriations bill can be found at: http://election.dos.state.fl.us/laws/07laws/ch_2007-072.pdf

The Department of Juvenile Justice Office of Education provides a point of contact for students, families and others in need of information and technical assistance. It also serves as a forum for collaboration across the educational continuum of services and community, county, circuit, region, state and national resource development and training. State level policy, program and professional development activities are ongoing within the Department of Juvenile Justice and encompass collaboration with school districts and providers throughout Florida, the Department of Education (DOE), Department of Children and Families (DCF), Agency for Persons with Disabilities, Agency for Workforce Innovation, Workforce Florida, Inc., regional work force boards, judiciary and other persons invested in the improvement of educational and employability outcomes of juvenile justice involved youth.

A stronger emphasis on school and community-based prevention is essential to developing alternatives to arrest and incarceration. Community-based programs serving youth such as the Florida Network, Pace Centers for Girls, and Associated Marine Institutes provide options for youth in need of prevention and intervention services. Each of Florida’s regional juvenile detention centers also pride themselves in quality education for youth despite the diversity and transient nature of students. Residential programs strive to maintain educational coursework comparable to students’ prior schedule, although many serve youth that have not been attending school prior to their juvenile justice system involvement. Several school districts and residential programs have demonstrated outstanding efforts to improve academic outcomes and employability of students while in their care. It is essential that school personnel collaborate with juvenile justice personnel and contract providers to maximize available resources and integrate as many educational opportunities as possible into the overall schedule.

As set forth in the Department's Long Range Program Plan (LRPP), residential programs have implemented the following strategies to enhance meaningful vocational programming for youth in their care:

- Establish baseline and growth in each category of vocational education provided in juvenile justice residential commitment programs.
- Develop a Model Exit Transition checklist for residential commitment programs for standard program use in documenting value-added life skill, career education and employability readiness upon program completion.
- Collaborate with workforce development programs to initiate local partnerships and resource development.
- Participate in updating Florida's Career and Technical Education Plan for Juvenile Justice Involved Students.
- Develop legislative budget requests for additional vocational placement and distance learning opportunities.
- Showcase best practices at state and regional conferences and through product development.

Collaborative Efforts and Initiatives

The Department has a strong commitment to excellence, cross-program and cross-agency training and collaboration with others. This past year juvenile justice personnel participated in and/or presented at all of the following:

- Annual Juvenile Justice Education Institute
- Able Trust Fund initiatives
- Jobs for Florida's Graduates National Conference
- The nations' first "Faces of Courage" Training Institute, aimed at reducing the incidence of women in the criminal justice system, particularly women of color
- The DOE Dropout Prevention Task Force
- DCF Dependency Summit
- Adult and Community Education task forces on adults with learning disabilities
- Adult education and the GED practitioner's task force
- Native American statewide training event
- National and statewide workforce development initiatives
- The federally mandated State Advisory Board required by the Bureau of Exceptional Student Education and Community Services
- National public/private partnership summits on child welfare privatization
- Regularly scheduled training for front line workers in the areas of detention, probation and residential officers. The latter includes the importance of collaboration and information sharing with school districts in individualized service coordination and planning for multidisciplinary, multi-agency involved youth.

The Education Office also regularly contributes to the following interagency initiatives:

- **DOE/DJJ Interagency Workgroup** established by Section 1003.52(1)(d), Florida Statutes, prescribing the roles of program personnel and interdepartmental district, school board or provider collaboration strategies.
- **Strengthening Youth Partnership**, a replication of the federal Department of Labor Strengthening Youth Partnership model with the goal of interagency collaboration with a focus on employment of Florida's youth who are most in need.
- **DOE State Advisory for the Education of Exceptional Students**, a statewide workgroup required by the Individuals with Disabilities Act serving as a forum for review and input to the Department of Education's plan for federal funding available to youth served in exceptional student education programs.

- **Drug Control Strategy Committee**, interagency workgroup charged with the task of developing the Governor's Drug Control Strategy for 2007-2011.
- **Communities in Schools**: DJJ serves on the Board of Directors for the nation's largest dropout prevention organization focused on helping kids stay in school and prepare for life by connecting community resources with the students and families that need them most. The Department is collaborating closely with them at the state level and four communities with shared prevention grant activities. CIS wants to ensure that youth have access to the "5 Basics" which include:
 - A one on one relationship with a caring adult.
 - A safe place to learn and grow.
 - A healthy start and a healthy future.
 - A marketable skill to use upon graduation.
 - A chance to give back to their peers and the community.
- **Florida Council on Crime and Delinquency**: DJJ serves on the Board of Directors to the statewide organization consistent of thirty-three chapters across the state with a focus on professional and resource development for criminal justice agencies and related community needs.
- **Interagency Services Committee for Youth and Young Adults with Disabilities**, authorized by Senate Bill 1278 to align the transition services and eliminate barriers in order to ensure a successful transition to employment and further educational opportunities for youth and young adults with disabilities.
- **Governor's Commission on Disabilities**--Executive Order # 07-148, includes the DJJ to have an appointed "Disability Champion" to develop strategies and modalities to ensure availability of information to persons with disabilities.
- **Children's Cabinet** includes service by the Secretary of the Department of Juvenile Justice with the goal of writing a plan to improve statewide collaboration among child serving agencies in Florida.
- **Board of Directors for Workforce Florida, Inc.**, with representation by the Secretary of the Department of Juvenile Justice or designee, to establish workforce policy for the State of Florida.

The Department of Juvenile Justice also has a continuing relationship with **Very Special Arts of Florida**. This program makes it possible for artists to work with youth in prevention, detention, day treatment and residential settings. Youth benefit from the instruction of professional artists and are able to express themselves through positive outlets. Programs featuring artists working with youth this past year included: Pensacola Boys Base, Columbus Juvenile Residential Facility, Duval Pace Center for Girls, DeSoto Dual Diagnosis, Camp E-Ma-Chamee, Union Juvenile Residential Facility, St. Lucie Pace Center for Girls, Space Coast Marine Institute, Three Springs Sex Offender Program, Lighthouse Juvenile Residential Facility, Miami Dade Regional Juvenile Detention Center, Collier Regional Juvenile Detention Center, Peace River Outward Bound, Price Halfway House, Monticello New Life, Okeechobee Juvenile Offenders Correctional Center and the Palm Beach Juvenile Correctional Facility.

Just Read, Florida!

Juvenile educational programs are also making an impact on youth literacy (Section 985.625, Florida Statutes) having identified the following four strategies as their focus in this area:

- Active participation in the Just Read, Florida! Workgroup.
- Appointment of education coordinators in each of the three regions to work with area Detention centers in planning and executing comprehensive educational programming, and specifically youth literacy.
- Establish libraries in cooperation with local entities as a means of improving youth literacy.
- Monitor progress through analysis of reports on regional activities and accomplishments forwarded to Detention Services at Headquarters.

Other programs have a long-standing partnership with their communities and, in the case of Pensacola Boys Base, the local military base. The Pensacola Boys Base recently reported that youth academic achievement is steadily improving. Of the fifty-five youth enrolled at the facility since July 1, 2007, thirty-two passed the GED exam earning State of Florida high school diplomas, two received regular high school diplomas, four earned Option 2 Special Diplomas, and fifteen students returned to school upon release. Equally as impressive is that two youth are currently attending college. They recently received national recognition for their demonstrated academic students' progress from participating in the "Fast Forward" curriculum.

On May 17, 2007, Rule 63B-1 was enacted. This order addresses career related programs within the Department, and was developed to more clearly define the responsibilities of the Department and contract providers relating to vocational and career programs. Department of Juvenile Justice Rule 63B-1 establishes the standards and requirements for the Department's juvenile justice career-related programs. The rule specifically addresses the requirement for all programs to incorporate a level of vocational training, the hiring of vocational staff by the department, youth assessment and participation in vocational activities, the cooperative agreement with the Department of Education and reporting requirements. To view the rule in its entirety, please visit: <https://www.flrules.org/gateway/ChapterHome.asp?Chapter=63B-1>

Post-Secondary Education and Partnerships

Post secondary options for the high school graduates in juvenile justice detention and residential commitment programs remain a continuous need. There is no dedicated funding to serve this population, and programming is contingent upon local resourcefulness and creativity. Youth may enter detention having already completed a high school diploma and/or be placed in a commitment program. All programs are encouraged to create "career centers," within their programs to accommodate the post-secondary and employability preparation needs of these students.

In response to this issue the Juvenile Justice Accountability Block Grant awarded a \$269,000 grant to *Success 4 Kids and Families, Inc* operating out of Hillsborough County to research juvenile justice involved youth having dropped out of school, pilot a model to re-engage these students and offer opportunities for post-secondary education. Juvenile justice commitment programs applied for "mini grants" to address the needs of high school graduates with approximately 100 youth served by these funds. Computer-based skill development, college tuition, and vocational skill development were among the services made available which also incorporated an effort to increase commitment to school among probation youth in Circuit 13. Although it is too early to evaluate the success of this program, data to date appear to indicate significantly reduced recidivism rates when compared to other probation youth in the state.

The Education Office has also collaborated with the Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation in development of the William Bankhead Scholarship, a Gammons Reading Program, and partnership with VSA arts of Florida. A partnership formed with the Tallahassee Community College (TCC) Foundation in the fall of 2006 piloted legislatively available matching funds for scholarships. CSX was the first corporation to contribute \$5,000 to this fund with the goal of statewide replication. Six students have received \$1,000 scholarships from the Juvenile Justice Foundation to date, and scholarships remain available from TCC pending further applications.

Older adolescents in juvenile justice programs are primarily interested in employability readiness. Many students within the programs come from outside the school district or have not been attending school regularly prior to placement in a detention or commitment program. The majority of school districts provide support at levels above the minimal requirements to these programs despite the specific issues faced when operating these self-contained schools with little to no control over the student population. Students in these programs are not eligible for school choice and are often geographically isolated from family members. Schools work to include families unable to visit through conference calls and correspondence.

The majority of juvenile justice education programs are funded by the school district in which the facility is located, but there are exceptions. Washington County Schools provides educational programs and services to residential programs in Jackson and

Okeechobee Counties as a result of the “Bobby M” lawsuit settlement. This settlement not only reduced student populations at these facilities, it also provided funding for the development of vocational programs at the Dozier School for Boys. Students served by the Eckerd Youth Wilderness Programs throughout Florida are all enrolled in Pinellas County Schools as a result of a longstanding partnership between the program and school district serving students multiple counties.

The majority of Florida’s juvenile justice schools are proud of their efforts to re-engage students in education and further their progress in many arenas contributing to the goals of healthier, more educated and employable citizens. Student progress is a result of many variable factors including youth motivation, involvement of family, and strength of local leadership. Examples of community involvement and educational outreach shared by one school district are included below as an example of the myriad of programs and services that juvenile justice and educational personnel collaboratively make available to youth above and beyond school curriculum, federal and state requirements.

Ms. Peggy Morrison-Thurston, Director of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention for the School Board of Broward County, shared the following list of activities occurring through the month of September and early October. The type of programs and speakers on this list may be found in many other juvenile justice education programs and reflect not only practical and culturally diverse information but the dedication and commitment of hundreds of individuals. In appreciation...

- Michael Hale from the Broward Detention Center shared that David Watkins, Assistant Principal of the Whiddon-Rogers Education Center, Detention Superintendent Ms. Wolf, Assistant Superintendent Captain Smith and Mr. Hale, Guidance Services, developed a collaborative plan to incorporate community involvement, vocational and career opportunities, college and university exposure, restorative justice, reading, and more.
- Instruction from “Chef Mike,” a/k/a/ Michael Dubanewicz, of the Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts Miami
- A five week series workshop on domestic violence entitled, “Women in Distress,” by Ms. Viola Joseph
- Mr. Dan Izinga from the local humane society has partnered with the Broward Sheriff’s Office to provide foster care for animals that live in homes where domestic violence is occurring. He also discusses the importance of pet safety, pet responsibility, how animals help the sick, and a history on K-9 and feline species, pet food ingredients, and much more.
- Curtis Burns, a congressional assistant to U.S. State Representative Kendrick Meek spoke to the youth September 6th. With a passionate style that allowed him to easily relate to youth, his message about making the right choices, believing in themselves, and the importance of reading and receiving a great education, was well received by the students. He emphasized the importance of voting and getting to know your public servants.
- Richard Dillon, a water treatment expert spoke September 18th with the youth about this promising in-demand career. He explained the licensure procedures, pay, benefits, and discussed the procurement of “clean” drinking water. He showed a video demonstrating the benefits of a career in water treatment. He also explained how to register for courses at Piper High School, which offers the licensure classes.
- Altaf Ali shared his knowledge on cultural diversity, educating the youth on what it means to be Muslim and more. He shared information about helping to lessen hatred through understanding and mutual respect. He showed a fascinating PowerPoint presentation which explained some basic facts about Islam and its influence throughout the world. Additionally, to underscore the importance of cultural diversity, a female practitioner of the religion shared her story and discussed differences in beliefs.
- Penny Miller, program coordinator for the Urban League, a Crime Prevention & Intervention Program, funded through Broward County’s Attorney Office, also presented to youth in Broward Detention about their services, including teenage pregnancy prevention, youth groups, employability workshops, and teen summits.

- A presentation was provided by ARLIC- African-American Research Library & Cultural Center including artifacts, story reading, initiation of a monthly book club for the female class (addressing gender specific issues), and demonstrations/try-outs of various instruments. The representative continues to donate books to the facility.
- Prince Jones from the local health department spoke with youth about nutrition on September 17th and 27th and other important health issues such as vitamins, exercise, food preparation (grilling, broiling, steaming vs. frying), he even brought in a five pound synthetic fat belt to help youth learn how it feels to carrying around a “few extra pounds.” He conducts monthly science health classes with female students, covering topics such as pre and post-natal health and pregnancy.
- Thomas Collins spoke with the youth about the three technical/vocational schools located in Broward County. Using a power-point presentation as well as a question and answer format, Mr. Collins explained everything from the various majors to entrance requirements, scholarship opportunities, and potential career choices.
- A Laughter Workshop was conducted October 9th by Gail Choate, inspired by real life doctor Patch Adams, showing students the health and other benefits of laughter. She played music and danced and had an interactive question and answer sessions to engage youth in this fun-filled workshop.
- Harrison, owner of African Book Store, shared his wisdom on life, reading, and cultural awareness This fascinating speaker discussed his “TOP 10 MYTHS MY TEACHER TAUGHT ME” which included things such as: Columbus discovering America, Black skin/hair being bad, The Olmec people, the myth behind having blue eyes, the true number of continents (Europe is not a continent, it’s simply western Asia), etc.
- Regular programs presented by the School Of Health include discussing medical and dental programs with the youth.
- The program, ON-TRACK, in Hollywood, FL, runs from October through March where students learn basic business skills and learn to start and run a real life business. They learn how to silk-screen T-Shirts; they choose a president, treasurer, etc., form a real corporation, and also earn money from it. Through JA (Junior Achievement), they create a business under this umbrella. They deposit money into a real account and keep track of it. They cannot have any repeat negative behavior, no suspensions from school, and must attend school regularly.
- Other subject areas brought through outreach to Broward’s students who are involved with the juvenile justice system include: job corps, automotive repair, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, quality assurance, science health with female students (covering such important topics as pre and post-natal health, pregnancy, complications from nicotine); the National School of Technology, DFYIT- Drug Free Youth In Town, Critter Control, Manding Jata (a live theatrical performance celebrating the regions of Africa), SEAS (Student Enrichment in the Arts), Harmony Development Center, GREAT (Gang Resistance Education And Training), Broward Community College, and Ready to Work (an initiative stemming from the ACT organization with successful partnerships with Winn-Dixie, American Express and dozens of other employers, where students take a diagnostic test, and when ready, take a timed, online work assessment). Mr. Carroll Williams, a former record setting running back from Xavier University spoke with students about how to set and reach goals, determination, and the importance of a good education,

This type of networking translates into academic successes in residential programs as well. For example, Thompson Academy, South Pines Academy, Broward Intensive Halfway House, Lighthouse, and The Juvenile Detention Center combined had 44 out of 51 juvenile justice students earn their high school diplomas last year. Additionally, five students earned Youth Automotive Scholarships at South Pines Academy and Thompson Academy. One talented student was one of four winners in a Black History Essay Contest and was awarded a DELL laptop computer. Finally, female students from Lighthouse were selected to manage the "Pet Pictures with Santa" promotion from Petsmart, where the students participated in all aspects of the promotion and all monies earned were donated to Adopt a Stray, a local pet rescue group.

Student contacting juvenile justice personnel with success stories after leaving programs occurs on a regular basis. These are not captured in performance reporting systems but keep personnel motivated year after year.