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EVALUATION OF JUVENILE JUSTICE EDUCATION PROGRAMS:
WHAT THE NUMBERS SAY ABOUT JUVENILE RECIDIVISM

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Education
in the Department of Education, Research, Technology, and Leadership
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ABSTRACT

Each year more than 100,000 juveniles are incarcerated in residential rehabilitative facilities. As part of their course of treatment, educational services are mandated for these incarcerated youth. Programs serving these individuals must provide adequate and appropriate educational programs for these juveniles. With a growing public concern over juvenile delinquency and recidivism, programs are being held accountable for the effectiveness and quality of the programming they offer. In Florida, juvenile justice programs offering educational services are monitored annually by the Juvenile Justice Education Enhancement Program. These programs receive a Quality Assurance (QA) rating as determined by a review team that spends several days in the program reviewing documentation and interviewing youth and program staff. This study proposes to examine any potential relationship between the rating a program receives and how successful youth are in returning to mainstream society and subsequently school. Linear regression analysis is the main statistical method to answer four research questions designed to examine these potential relationship. A total of 177 Moderate and High Risk programs were included in the study and the QA scores they received over a three year were analyzed. Surprisingly, the research and subsequent analysis shows little relationship between educational program quality and success rates for juveniles exiting incarceration. This result may warrant further study as to the additional factors contributing to a youth's re-involvement in the juvenile justice system.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Works of the magnitude of a project like this study are seldom, if ever, the result of a single source. Rather, they are the culmination of the collective efforts of numerous individuals involved at varying levels in guiding a project towards its completion. To that end, there are a few people I would like to acknowledge and thank for their part in this project.

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CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

When juveniles in Florida are adjudicated guilty of serious crimes, they are committed to residential placements by the juvenile courts for periods of time lasting up to 36 months. These recommendations for placement are originated by staff from the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice. Across the United States, more than 100,000 youth are currently incarcerated for the crimes they have committed against society. As part of their program of rehabilitation, these juveniles must also be provided with educational services along with other components such as behavior modification and social skill development in order to facilitate their eventual return to mainstream society.

Typically, more than 2 million adolescents will be arrested each year for crimes of varying severity. The 1980s in particular saw a spike in the frequency of juvenile crime (Hamilton, Sullivan, Veysey & Grillo, 2007). More than 300,000 of these youths will spend some time in a juvenile detention center (Garfinkel and Nelson, 2004). In Florida, there are almost 10,000 juveniles living in residential incarceration (Chester, Tracy, Earp & Chauhan, 2002). The crimes committed by these juveniles vary greatly in nature and the security level of their placement and length of incarceration are directly related to the severity of the offense. In Florida, the juvenile justice system consists of a continuum of placements ranging from day treatment type programs all the way through long term residential commitment. The programs are leveled based on their degree of restrictiveness.

In many instances, residential placement is the consequence for repeated law infractions. It becomes clear therefore, that many schools are likely to have students who are actively involved in the juvenile justice system, perhaps even to the extent of being removed for purposes of beginning a period of incarceration (Robb, 2006).

In recent years, public policy and practice has tended to focus increasingly on more severe punishment and accountability for delinquent juveniles and less on rehabilitation (Poirier, 2004). Many of the critics of the juvenile justice system in the United States contend that among other things, it fails to provide adequate educational services that prepare youth for their eventual return to society (Mazzotti & Higgins, 2006). As more juveniles are waived into the adult correctional system, they are also held longer in pre-trial detention which inhibits their access to appropriate educational services (Portner, 1996). In a time of great demand by the tax-paying public, state agencies and the providers of juvenile justice programming are being pressed for positive outcomes and accountability. More and more, the responsibility for ensuring public safety and restoring confidence in the juvenile justice is falling to the education of incarcerated youth.

Florida spends millions of taxpayer dollars incarcerating juveniles and trying to rehabilitate them in order to return them to society so they do not commit additional crimes. The state also spends hundreds of thousands of dollars evaluating the quality of the services, including education, provided for these incarcerated youth. The public expects results for their investment.

There is a cost factor associated with juvenile criminal behavior that in many instances is rooted to a great extent in education, or perhaps better put, the lack of

education. The cost of detaining a juvenile in a residential setting is more than \$29,000 a year and rising. Illiteracy is one of the issues driving this cost. As a whole, illiteracy is a growing concern across the United States, and within the prison population the illiteracy rate is about 25%. The failure to be able to effectively read can be associated with \$224 billion in welfare payments in the United States (Vacca, 2008). Many incarcerated adults began their criminal careers by dropping out of high school (Winters, 1997). Research has frequently demonstrated that there is a strong relationship between high school drop-out rates and the inmate populations in prisons. Dropping out is more than frequently associated with juvenile delinquency, with many adult inmates beginning a long term association with law enforcement as youth. States with the lowest high school drop-out rates have also been shown to have lower prison populations (Winters, 1997). Juveniles who perform poorly in school have diminished academic skills which in turn reduce their potential to find meaningful employment (Mincey, Maldonado, Lacey & Thompson, 2008).

In recent years there has been an increased focus on improving the quality of educational programs within the juvenile justice system, especially in Florida. In Florida, the juvenile justice education system is in many ways considered to be a sub school district of the local school system who has responsibility to ensure compliance with statute and the Quality Assurance Standards. Starting in the 1980s, the United States Justice Department began taking legal action against state and local governments for not ensuring that incarcerated juveniles receive appropriate medical, mental health, transition, and educational services (Crosby, Shippen & Jolivette, 2009).

Many states, Florida in particular, have developed performance standards that juvenile justice educational providers are expected to meet. Since many incarcerated juveniles enter the juvenile justice system with long histories of truancy, it is critical for educational programs to offer a secure setting where youth can focus their attention on their school work with minimal distractions (Langelett & Zenz, 2005). Youth exiting incarceration frequently report that the educational setting they participated in was critical to their ability to set goals and plan for a successful return to society. More often than not, juveniles exiting residential incarceration with highly structured academic settings related that their participation in the program helped them to overcome negative perceptions about school and their own ability to succeed (Mincey, et. al, 2008). The oversight of the rehabilitative component of program quality for juvenile justice programs in Florida is the responsibility of the Department of Juvenile Justice's Bureau of Quality Assurance.

The quality of educational programs within the Florida juvenile justice system is monitored by the Juvenile Justice Educational Enhancement Program (JJEED). JJEED is operated by Florida State University through a contract with the Florida Department of Education. The educational standards by which juvenile justice educational programs are evaluated against consist of four (4) elements: Transition, Service Delivery, Educational Resources, and Contract Management. Programs are rated against performance indicators on a scale of 0 to 9, with 0 defining non-performance and 9 defining the high end of superior performance. There are also compliance indicators where a program is found to be in compliance with or not in compliance with the requirements of what is considered to be a critical indicator. The reviews of juvenile justice educational programs are

conducted by JJEPP staff along with trained peer reviewers. These peer reviewers are either educators from other juvenile justice education programs or school district staff engaged in ensuring the quality of educational services in their respective districts.

Statement of the Problem

Each year, the Florida Legislature appropriates millions of public tax dollars for juvenile justice programs and services. Since 1998, there has been an increasing call for program quality and accountability outcomes (Chester, et al., 2002). The tax-paying citizens of Florida want the problem of juvenile delinquency solved, and more specifically, the concern over the high rates at which juveniles commit new crimes after incarceration. Policy makers, legislators and the citizens of Florida want to be confident that the funds appropriated to educate incarcerated juveniles are accomplishing the task they have been appropriated to do. Juvenile crime and recidivism in particular have become nagging social issues that continue to plague policy and decision makers (Baffour, 2006). The Bureau of Quality Assurance under the auspices of the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice was established in 1994 to monitor the quality of programs intended to rehabilitate juvenile offenders in Florida.

Since research has consistently demonstrated that poor performance in school is a major contributor to juvenile delinquency, it would not be unreasonable to believe that the educational experience a youth receives while incarcerated will factor significantly into how successful he is in returning to society without committing additional crimes. Incarcerated students have pronounced academic deficiencies and low skill levels, especially in the area of reading (Houchins, Jolivette, Krezmien & Baltodano, 2008).

Experts tend to agree that a strong education for youth while they are incarcerated is paramount to facilitating a successful return to society and school (Mincey, et. al, 2008). In 1998, The Juvenile Justice Educational Enhancement Program (JJEEP) was born in an effort to apply the same quality monitoring for educational programs in the juvenile justice system so as to compliment what was already in place for the treatment component. The current mission of JJEEP is to provide annual program evaluations as well as to conduct research on best practices in juvenile justice settings and disseminate those strategies (Blomberg & Waldo, 2001).

This study proposes to examine the potential relationships between evaluation scores received by juvenile justice educational programs and the propensity of juveniles to commit additional crimes upon release from incarceration. A high Quality Assurance score indicates that a program is meeting the established standards of good practice and it can then be surmised that the program is offering effective educational services to incarcerated juveniles. Conversely, the assumption can be made that a program earning poor QA scores is likely offering sub-standard or inadequate educational services. The purpose of this study is to attempt to synthesize the existing literature related to juvenile delinquency and juvenile justice education in order to form a framework for examining the influence a youth's educational experience while incarcerated on how successfully he transitions back into mainstream society. Part of that influence is rooted in a youth not re-offending after being released from incarceration. Numerous studies have shown that juveniles recidivate at rates as high as 50% within a year of their release from their residential commitment. Further research has shown that less than 10% of first time

juvenile offenders, when they commit additional crimes, are responsible for more than half of all violent crimes (Jimerson, Sharkey, O'Brien & Furlong, 2004).

The main objectives of providing quality educational services to incarcerated youth are to provide them with positive experiences that they can carry with them back into their schools and community, and to ensure that they do not fall hopelessly behind in their academic careers (Leone, Krezmien, Mason & Meisel, 2005). By examining the possible relationship between a juvenile justice education program's quality assurance rating and the program's recidivism rate, inferences may be made regarding the impact the juvenile justice education program has on a youth's ability to successfully return to society without committing additional crimes, and to complete his or her secondary education.

A significant amount of literature is available as to why juveniles turn to delinquency. There is also a sizeable body of information pertaining to the causes of juvenile recidivism. In recent years, more information has become available regarding what constitutes best practices within education in the juvenile justice system and classroom instruction delivery strategies. The amount of literature available that speaks to outcomes as a direct result of programming and the evaluations of programs is considerably less plentiful.

In light of the push in recent years for accountability in juvenile justice, this study may prove valuable in assessing the effectiveness of how Florida's juvenile justice system rehabilitates delinquent youth. Society and law makers have been increasingly demanding accountability for the financial and human resources being plowed into solving the issue of juvenile delinquency (Mincey, et. al, 2008). This demand may be

particularly enlightening since the Quality Assurance Standards are based on best practices and the scores a program earns are reflective of their ability to meet or exceed the established benchmarks. These scores therefore, may (or may not) be predictive of a juvenile's chances for not re-offending upon release from incarceration.

In light of the public's demand for greater accountability, this study will examine how well education programs for delinquent youth are meeting their mandate of providing the type of academic experience that will increase a youth's chances for a successful return to his or her community. The failure of many programs to meet legal mandates for incarcerated juveniles and their educational rights is also cogent to assessing the effectiveness of correctional education for youth as a deterrent for juvenile recidivism. Programs not achieving satisfactory ratings are subject to submitting corrective action plans that require the local superintendent's signature.

Conceptual Framework

The Juvenile Justice Education Enhancement Program (JJEPP) takes its statutory authority from Section 1003. 52 of the Florida Statutes which details the educational services that must be offered to juveniles in juvenile justice facilities and the responsibility of The Department of Education (DOE) and the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). Rule 6A-6.05281, FAC also delineates the required services juveniles must receive while in DJJ's custody. This rule also specifies the need for such services as transition planning, Exceptional Student Education (ESE), movement of student records, staff qualifications and several other requirements. JJEPP has based the majority of the Quality Assurance (QA) standards on the requirements of this rule.

While a great deal has been researched and written about why juveniles turn to delinquency and why they re-offend, there is substantially less on how well programs actually work in providing academic gains and even less on their effect on recidivism. The four JJEEP Quality Assurance standards have been developed over time and are based on recognized best practices within the field that have been researched and documented. Additionally, these best practices are rooted in methodologies that can offer the incarcerated student a positive educational experience and promote recognizable academic gains.

These standards are reviewed each year by JJEEP staff in conjunction with school systems and juvenile justice educational practitioners. The JJEEP quality assurance standards have 13 key indicators which in turn are broken into greater detail by sub-indicators. Key indicators are specific points of evaluation within a standard that describe how a program's educational services are meeting the requirements established by the Department of Education (DOE). There are eleven (11) benchmarks that have been identified as critical to a program earning at least a rating of satisfactory performance. These critical benchmarks include entry academic assessment, the development of Individual Academic Plans (IAP) and Individual Educational Plans (IEP), direct reading instruction, teacher certification, and adequate instructional time as well as several others pertaining to contracts and information management.

Teams of specifically trained JJEEP program reviewers make annual site visits to review how well juvenile justice educational programs are meeting the established standards. These reviewers work in teams and utilize standardized sampling guidelines based on a program's design and the number of youth residing in the facility. Reviewers

review educational records, make classroom observations, and interview students and faculty to determine a program's score on a particular indicator as compared against the identified criteria. Each indicator receives a performance rating which collectively builds a program's overall QA score. The QA review process also takes into account factors that JJEEP considers to be external and not within the program's scope of control so that the fairest and most accurate program review takes place.

Research Questions

Since juvenile justice programs are evaluated across a spectrum of both rehabilitative and educational standards, it stands to reason that one or more factors may influence a youth's future propensity towards continuing delinquent behavior. With the following research questions as a guide, this study will examine any potential relationships that may exist between the degree to which a program meets the QA standards and reduced delinquent behavior after juveniles have been released from incarceration. If a relationship exists between providing high quality educational services and reduced recidivism, then it may be assumed that the State of Florida is requiring and measuring the right kinds of indicators. But if the numbers show that a relationship does not exist, or is a weak one, then it might also lead practitioners to further examine the standards by which juvenile justice educational programs are held accountable for and are evaluated against. The research questions for this study are as follows:

1. What, if any, relationship exists between the mean Education Quality Assurance score a program receives during an annual review by JJEEP and the rates that juveniles successfully re-integrate back into society?

2. What, if any, relationship exists between the score a program receives in the Transition Standard and the rate at which juveniles successfully re-integrate into society?
3. Which of the four (4) Quality Assurance Educational Domains, if any, are the best predictors of the rates of successful re-integration for juveniles?
4. Which of the four (4) Quality Assurance Domains, if any, are the best predictors of the rates of successful re-integration for youth exiting residential programs?

Study Design

Each year, all programs housing juvenile offenders must be reviewed by both the Department of Juvenile Justice's (DJJ) Bureau of Quality Assurance and the Juvenile Justice Educational Enhancement Program (JJEED). The Bureau of Quality Assurance each year publishes the results of these scores, including the scores received by the educational component. DJJ and JJEED both publish annual evaluation results with detailed breakdowns on how programs scored in standards and individual quality indicators. The Department of Juvenile Justice also publishes information on other program performance indicators such as cost per completion, program effectiveness and completion rates for residential programs.

When programs are evaluated, the final overall (mean) score they are awarded falls into one of the following categories: *Superior, High Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Marginal Satisfactory, Below Satisfactory, and Unsatisfactory*. These designations are based on earning a specific percentage of the possible score in each standard and then being combined into a mean program score. Within each of the four standards are key

indicators that reflect desired practice which the program is evaluated against. Each indicator is rated on the following scale: Superior Performance (7,8,9 points); Satisfactory Performance (4,5,6 points); Partial Performance (1,2,3 points); and Non-Performance (0 points).

It is possible therefore, for a program to sometimes receive a mean score in the *Satisfactory* range while performing poorly in an individual standard. Likewise, a program could receive a poor mean score while performing well in a single standard. This result could mean that the overall score a program earns may not always be fully indicative of the quality of educational programming it is providing to the youth in that particular institution. Programs that perform below the *Satisfactory* level in any standard or as a program, are required to develop and implement corrective action to remedy their deficiencies. This lack of performance may warrant closer examination of how individual standards may influence the tendency of juveniles exiting a program to re-offend.

Recidivism rates and Quality Assurance scores will be gathered from three consecutive years; 2003, 2004, and 2005. Only programs that received full evaluations in all three years will be included in the statistics group. The group will also include only those programs with restrictiveness levels categorized as Level 6 or Level 8. Level 6 programs typically have an average length of stay between 7 to 12 months while Level 8 programs have average length of stay ranging between 12 to 18 months for incarcerated juveniles. These two levels of incarceration were selected for two reasons. First, they retain youth for a long enough period of incarceration to have the opportunity to fully immerse a juvenile in the educational component of the program. Secondly, the term of

incarceration is short enough that the vast majority of juveniles released from the program will most likely return to school.

The first research question, which will focus on any potential relationship between a program's QA score and success rates upon release, will be examined by running a correlation analysis to determine the strength of the relationship between the two variables; the education score and the success rate for juveniles exiting various programs. The program's education quality assurance score will be the mean score of the four standards that it is evaluated against compared with the rates at which juveniles successfully return to society for that program. Since so much of the literature identifies transition planning as a critical element in preparing juveniles for their return to society, it will also be valuable to examine the possible influence transition planning has on successful reintegration.

The second research question will study the strength of the relationship between the score a program earns in the transition standard and the rates at which juveniles successfully return to society through a correlation analysis. This analysis will allow for a closer examination of the influence a single standard may have on re-entry success if a program may be very strong in this standard but otherwise average overall. The past several years have seen a definite increase in focus and interest on transition planning and re-entry services for juveniles exiting residential placement (Abrams, Shannon & Sangalang, 2008).

The third and fourth research questions will be examined through the use of multiple linear regression. The third question will examine if any of the four domains within the Educational QA review is a better predictor of successful reintegration than the

others. Since all juvenile justice residential programs are also reviewed by the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), the fourth research question will examine if any of the four key program domains, one of which is education, is a better predictor of a youth's successful return to society. This is an important element in studying the role of the programmatic and educational components in preparing juveniles for a successful return to their homes, schools, and communities. Research has continued to emphasize the importance of a combination of academic and counseling services being paramount to increasing a youth's chances for successful reintegration back into society (Mincey, et. al, 2008).

To add depth and field applications to the statistical information, interviews with a minimum of eight (8) Juvenile Probation Officers (JPO) will be conducted. The JPOs will be asked questions related to their experiences in helping youth being released from residential treatment programs and their subsequent return to school and society. It is hoped that these interviews will add depth to the statistical analysis and provide greater insight into the activities that assist youth in successfully returning to their home communities and school. It may also serve of value in part to ascertain the degree to which JPOs are familiar with the quality of the educational component of various programs.

Significance and Limitations of the Study

As mentioned earlier, the literature regarding juvenile justice education is varied in its depth and scope of coverage. Since the late 1980s there has been a significant increase in the amount of research devoted to juvenile justice in general, and to education

for incarcerated youth. There are wide differences across state juvenile justice systems regarding the requirements for incarcerated juveniles to attend classes or even the types of education programs to offer (Black, 2005). This study has potential significance in that there is little literature focusing specifically on outcomes, particularly recidivism, related to the quality of a juvenile justice education program.

With the ever increasing impact of legislation such as No Child Left Behind (P.L. 107-110) (NCLB) on educational programming for incarcerated juveniles, the need for accountability and the assurance of quality services for detained youth is critical. NCLB has mandated that programs provide certified instructional personnel, transition planning, and the demonstration of academic gains in educational programs serving delinquent youth. The State of Florida Department of Education has the same set of expectations and mandates. The quality assurance standards reflect annual evaluations that encompass research, best practices and statutory requirements in order to ensure programs are offering the best possible services that meet the requirements of the law and the Department of Education for incarcerated juveniles.

Much has been written over the years as to why juveniles turn to criminal activity. A lack of academic success soon creates other issues for students who become increasingly disruptive and more disengaged from the educational system. Students begin a pattern of truancy which more often than not leads to involvement with law enforcement. Students entering into the juvenile justice system repeatedly manifest low literacy and math skills as a result of their unfulfilling experiences in school (Black, 2005). Indeed, the average reading level for incarcerated juveniles has been shown to be between 5th and 7th grades (Houchins, et., al., 2009). The literature that examines why

juveniles re-offend is also substantial as is the body of writing surrounding actual programming for delinquent youth. More recently, litigation over failures in the juvenile justice system has spawned more literature on the legal rights of incarcerated juveniles and the mandates of legislation such as No Child Left Behind and the Adults with Disabilities Education Act (Zenz & Langelett, 2004).

With juveniles re-offending at alarming rates, juvenile justice practitioners continue to search for the most effective ways in which to teach incarcerated youth. In Florida it is the mission of the Juvenile Justice Education Enhancement Program (JJEPP) to research and publish best or promising practices thought to offer hope in terms of increasing the opportunities for a juvenile's successful re-entry into society after incarceration (Blomberg & Waldo, 2001). There has been an increasing amount of attention being given to what educational services juveniles should have and their right to access those services.

This study offers the opportunity to more closely examine the outcomes for youth leaving the residential component of the juvenile justice system in Florida. This study therefore intends to add to the body of knowledge surrounding juvenile justice and in particular the effectiveness of educational practices in fighting juvenile recidivism. This study, although somewhat limited in its scope, does provide the opportunity for further, more focused research. For example, it may prove interesting and valuable to examine the effectiveness of juvenile justice education programs and the resulting recidivism rates of female delinquents as opposed to their male counterparts. It could also be useful to examine education in long term juvenile facilities and whether or not that educational experience was influential in deterring youth exiting the program from offending as

adults. An additional avenue of exploration, especially in light of recent litigation, might be to look at how well students with learning disabilities are transitioning back into society and school upon completion of their incarceration.

The last year has shown an increase in juvenile crime after several years of decline. With unsatisfactory school experiences responsible for a significant number of the influencing factors as to why juveniles turn to criminal activity, the need to examine the effectiveness of juvenile justice education programs is clear. The continued high rates of juvenile recidivism have many public officials questioning the effectiveness of programs aimed at rehabilitating youthful offenders (Abrams, Shannon & Sangalang, 2008). The public is frustrated with how frequently juveniles commit new crimes after their release from incarceration and are looking for ways that will help stop this dangerous trend. This study proposes to take an initial look at how much, if any, influence the quality of a youth's educational experience while incarcerated has on his or her tendency to commit new crimes. With so much at risk for our youth, hopefully others will also consider examining this issue as well.

The juvenile justice continuum of care in Florida is comprised of five levels of increasing confinement and security. When a youth is committed by the courts to the Department of Juvenile Justice, they are then placed in one of these levels based on the seriousness of the committing offense and their prior criminal history. The levels of confinement are as follows: Level 2 non residential; Level 4 low risk residential; Level 6 moderate risk residential; Level 8 high risk residential; and Level 10 maximum risk residential. Each level of commitment carries with it longer periods of placement and subsequent intensity of supervision after release.

This study will examine quality assurance scores and recidivism rates from Level 6 and Level 8 programs in Florida over a three year cycle of reviews (2003, 2004, and 2005). There are approximately 127 residential programs that were evaluated by JJEEP during the study cycle. Of these 127 programs, 81 are Level 6 and Level 8 programs, representing more than 50% of the total juvenile incarcerated population in Florida. These levels of residential placement were selected because they represent incarceration periods that in most cases allow for a juvenile to have the opportunity to return to school and his community.

Level 10 placements have a minimum commitment of 36 months so in the vast majority of cases these youth will have earned a high school credential while incarcerated and have begun working on vocational studies. Level 4 placements are too short, typically 3 to 6 months to gauge the impact of the educational program to the same degree as in the identified levels for this study. The review cycles were selected after consultation with the Department of Juvenile Justice's Institutional Review Board because these years have the most complete and recent re-arrest and recidivism data necessary for the study.

Juveniles being released from incarceration face a host of issues that will influence their ability to successfully return to school and the community. A successful educational experience while incarcerated will have a significant impact on a youth's desire to remain trouble free upon his release from custody. A juvenile who has had the benefit of attending school in a highly rated program would seem to stand a better chance of being successful than a youth who was enrolled in a lower rated program. While academic success and a positive educational experience are not the only factors tied to

successful reintegration, it does play a major role, especially where transition planning is concerned (Bullis, Havel & Yovanoff, 2004).

CHAPTER TWO REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are numerous issues relating to the juvenile justice system that contribute to an increasing public concern about juvenile delinquency and how to best handle youth that commit serious crimes. Many have termed the juvenile delinquency issue as a menace or even a public health “epidemic” plaguing society (Bullis & Yovanoff, 2005). Juveniles aged 10 to 17 years old have the highest risk for either perpetrating crimes or becoming victims themselves, and the trend in recent years has shown offenders becoming much younger at their first point of contact with the system (Archwamety & Katsiyannis, 2000). Juveniles as young as eight (8) years old have confessed to committing premeditated murder. Pre-teens now account for 6% of all juvenile crime (Black, 2009). Demographic characteristics coupled with repeated academic failure in school puts numerous youth at risk for failing in school and society long before they may ever be placed in a correctional facility (Leone, Krezmien, Mason & Meisel, 2005). The increase in violent behavior of juveniles that started in the 1990s has escalated fears within schools and raised the awareness for the need to find ways to identify troubled youth and intervene much earlier in their academic careers (White, Fyfe, Campbell & Goldkamp, 2001).

Adding to the public’s sense of frustration is the alarming rate at which juveniles commit additional serious crimes after they have been released from incarceration. Recent re-arrest statistics have placed the recidivism rate for juveniles completing residential placement as high as 50% (Bullis, Havel & Yovanoff, 2004). In Florida’s juvenile justice system, youth with three or more adjudicated offenses are considered to

be chronic offenders. What is even more significant is that chronic offenders only comprise about 16% of the delinquent population yet they account for almost 50% of all juvenile crime (Norrbin, Rasmussen & Von-Frank, 2004). In many ways, even today, this public frustration is reflective of Martinson's (1974) opinion that education and strong rehabilitative programming cannot overcome the tendency of juveniles to commit crimes. His contention that protecting society over offering quality educational services drove the prevailing hard line philosophies and public policies regarding juvenile justice for many years. Indeed, to this day many lawmakers and scholars alike continue to question the value of correctional settings for juveniles that are focused on rehabilitative efforts (Abrams, Shannon & Sangalang, 2008).

According to the United States Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), more than 100,000 juveniles are currently incarcerated in residential centers as the result of the crimes they have committed against society. Statistics also reveal that as many as 10 million children in the United States have at least one parent that is incarcerated. Additionally, there is substantial evidence that youth with dual involvement in the child welfare system and the juvenile justice system are far more likely to be incarcerated than juveniles involved in only one system (Hamilton, et. al, 2007). During 2002, over 2 million adolescents were arrested for crimes diverse in nature and severity (Mazzotti & Higgins, 2006). These crimes ranged from trespassing and criminal mischief to grand theft auto and drug trafficking. In any given year, more than 300,000 youth will have spent some time in a juvenile detention center as a result of delinquent behavior (Garfinkel & Nelson, 2004). In Florida, there are almost 10,000 juveniles living in residential incarceration settings of varying levels of restrictiveness

(Chester, Tracy, Earp & Chauhan, 2002). These numbers support the notion that for many years Florida has been thought of as having one of the most serious juvenile crime problems in the nation (Bohac, Evans & Ritchie, 1996).

As a part of their program of rehabilitation, the Florida Legislature has directed that these juveniles must receive behavior modification, health and mental health services, social skill development, and educational services. Many of the detractors of the juvenile justice system across the United States claim that the system fails to not only rehabilitate and protect these youth, but also to adequately educate them in preparation for their return to the community (Mazzotti & Higgins, 2006). Finding solutions to the causes of juvenile recidivism has become a topic of intense examination and interest to law makers.

The United States Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has identified three objectives of effective juvenile justice systems. The first objective is to make the youthful offender accountable for his crimes. The second is to empower the juvenile to become a more productive and responsible citizen. The third and final objective of juvenile justice systems is to help ensure public safety. In order to meet these objectives, involvement from numerous partners such as schools, mental health providers, law enforcement and juvenile justice providers must be strong and collaborative in nature. Offering delinquent youth a continuum of support services both during incarceration, and especially after their release is cogent to reducing recidivism (Wood, Wood & Mullins, 2008).

The crimes committed by these juveniles vary in nature. The severity of the crime and a youth's prior record determine the level of security for their incarceration and the

length of stay. In recent years, public policy and practice has tended to focus more on punishment and accountability than it has on providing them with the skills and education necessary to succeed upon release from residential commitment (Poirier, 2004). Since the early 1990's the number of juveniles being placed in out of community incarceration rose by 24%. Placement in secure detention rose 41% between 1985 and 2000 (Hamilton, et. al, 2007). Additional research has shown that male offenders given severe sentences through programs like Teen Court, which is actually a diversion program, are more prone to commit new crimes than those juveniles given less harsh punishments (Rasmussen, 2004).

There is also a significant over representation of Hispanic and African American males in the juvenile justice system. African American males comprise 15% of the juvenile population yet account for 45% of the juveniles being assigned into residential placement. The number of Hispanic juvenile males being placed into secure residential treatment doubled during the latter part of the 1980s and into the mid 1990s (Baffour, 2006).

During the latter part of the 1990's, most states passed legislation making it much easier to try juveniles charged with more serious crimes as adults and place them into the adult correctional system (Poirier, 2004). The ripple effect of this issue is that placing more juveniles in the adult correctional system makes it difficult at best to provide appropriate educational services for these youth. A significant number of juveniles housed in adult correctional institutions do not receive educational services that meet the minimal standards set forth by the American Correctional Association (ACA). This is a serious issue that only exacerbates a juvenile's academic shortcomings (Portner, 1996). It

has also caused states to increasingly rely on adult jails to house (and educate) violent juvenile offenders (Kupchik, 2007).

Interestingly, public opinion surveys indicate that the public, despite its general frustration with juvenile crime, is supportive of policies and practices that favor rehabilitation over more punitive measures. This issue is important for legislators interested in best allocating public funds to treat juvenile delinquency (Nagin, Piquero, Scott & Steinberg, 2006). Youth advocates have seen the push by government and the Department of Juvenile Justice for harsher sentences for juveniles as a force actually working against deterring criminal activity by youth. The camp that desires adult sentencing for juveniles does not recognize the powerful effect a strong education can have in possibly helping youth make better life choices upon their release from incarceration (Sheridan & Steele, 2005). Many local law enforcement agencies that are designed to work with adult offenders would in most instances not deal at all with juveniles. The officers are generally not familiar with the laws specific to juveniles and are not comfortable making those interactions (Asquith, 2007). Often, adult corrections staff have little if any understanding of the educational needs of high school aged delinquents, and end up offering ineffective and usually inappropriate educational services (Hayes, 1997).

Adolescent Females in the Juvenile Justice System

Researchers and even professionals in the field have long considered juvenile delinquency to be primarily an adolescent male endeavor. Although still far less likely to be arrested than males, statistics on juvenile arrests have revealed that the fastest growing segment of incarcerated juveniles is female offenders (Baffour, 2006). A significant part of this increase in female arrests can be attributed to changing approaches to arrest practices. Adolescent females are being charged in family conflicts, assaults, curfew violations and drug abuse violations with increasing frequency.

Studies have also found the adolescent females, in the juvenile justice system, like their male counterparts, have a much larger proportion of ethnic minority and impoverished backgrounds than that which is found in the general population (Ruffolo, Sarri & Goodkind, 2004). This revelation clearly demonstrates the necessity to focus on the needs of incarcerated females, including their education program, in order to better address the factors contributing to their delinquent behavior (Hubbard & Pratt, 2002). It also implies that the educational and social needs of female delinquents are considerably different than those of their male counterparts.

One of the greatest challenges that the juvenile justice system has faced over the past few years has been to develop and implement programs that are designed to deal specifically with female offenders and their unique issues. Female adolescent offenders are far more likely to be victims of physical and sexual abuse than their male counterparts. In far too many instances, female offenders being placed in residential commitment find themselves in program models that were designed for male delinquents.

The juvenile justice system as a whole suffers from a severe lack of program models designed to deal with female offenders and their specific problem set (Bloom, Owen, Deshenes & Rosenbaum, 2002).

Educationally, these issues must be handled effectively in order to provide the most appropriate academic setting possible for incarcerated female juveniles. Recently, institutions of higher learning such as the University of Missouri at Kansas City, have begun developing programs that provide outreach efforts to this unique population. Students studying criminal justice have particularly benefitted from this type of program as they have opportunities to work in the field with female offenders and develop a better understanding of the problems germane to female adolescents. It also affords incarcerated females the support and pro-social role models they so desperately need (Holsinger & Ayers, 2004).

School Failure and Delinquency

Youth entering the juvenile justice system frequently bring with them a long history of mostly unproductive experiences in school (Rider-Hankins, 1992). Wang, Blomberg and Li (2005) identified several school related factors that influence a youth's likelihood of becoming involved in delinquent activities. These include academic underachievement, poor attendance, disciplinary problems and unresolved learning disabilities. Poor achievement in school has in numerous studies been shown to lead to behavior issues, further distancing the student from any opportunity to be academically successful.

School administrators and teachers are increasingly refusing to tolerate students that are disruptive, and suspensions continue to rise (Black, 2009). During the course of a given year, more than 3 million students are suspended from school with 100,000 of those students being expelled (Fuentes, 2003). Often, students who are expelled do not return to school especially in their high school years and instead turn to delinquent types of behavior. Research has shown that juveniles who drop out of school are three times more likely to be arrested at some point than their peers who have or will graduate (Archwamety & Katsiyannis, 2000). Similar research has also shown that suspensions have not proven effective in dealing with student behavior. In fact, the numbers have shown that states with high school suspension rates also have a larger population of incarcerated juveniles (Fuentes, 2003).

Those juveniles who later become entangled in the juvenile justice system often exhibit certain indicative behaviors early in their academic careers. Students who subsequently become involved in criminal activity often are identified as being self centered and inconsiderate of their peers. In many instances, substandard parenting has caused youth to adopt ways of managing their behavior in significantly different ways from their more successful peers (Walker & Sprague, 1999). Parental involvement is critical for youth involved in the juvenile justice system yet these parents far too often have their own mental health and substance abuse issues that severely limit their ability to be effective and supportive parents (Wood, Wood & Mullins, 2008). After repeated failures in school, youth can often become angry and resistant to participating in classroom instruction (Casey, 1996). Since so many of these juveniles have been out of the educational mainstream for so long, it is often the residential program's first order of

business to simply grab their attention and return the primary focus back to academics and the classroom (Ingersoll & LeBoeuf, 1997). This is often best accomplished by offering the youth a highly structured program with few if any opportunities to engage in non-productive behavior.

Academic failure often leads disgruntled youth to seek out peers that are experiencing similar frustrations. There is a significant link between delinquency and association by juveniles with antisocial peers (Dishion, Patterson, Stoomiller & Skinner, 1991). Understanding the issues relating to the onset of anti-social behavior, and the age it begins, often will be crucial to predicting future behaviors, including the potential for delinquency. The tendency towards impulsive behavior is also an important indicator of a youth's proclivity towards juvenile delinquency (Carroll, Hemingway, Bower, Ashman, Houghton & Durkin, 2006). The failure of parents to monitor their adolescent's choice of friends further compounds the lack of success a youth experiences in school. As repeated school failure mounts, juveniles often commit crimes, and subsequently become involved with the juvenile justice system, thus adversely affecting their chances of completing high school (Sweeten, 2006). Adolescent females represent a special population of concern as they are the most rapidly growing segment of the juvenile justice system (Rodney & Mupier, 2004).

As a juvenile becomes increasingly dissatisfied with their experiences in school, they fall further and further behind academically and socially. Failure in areas such as basic literacy have been linked to choosing delinquent behavior as an outlet for a youth's frustration in school (Wheldall & Watkins, 2004). Failure by teachers to identify youth falling into this trap increases an adolescent's risk for delinquent behavior (Robb, 2006).

Frustration with unsupportive parents, the threat of litigation, and the failure of an often times unresponsive educational system all contribute to a teacher's reluctance to more readily identify struggling youth (Robb, 2006). Students with unclear academic goals and teachers unwilling to engage proactively in intervening with them when issues first arise also create risk factors that place adolescents at risk for delinquent behavior (Ingersoll & LeBoeuf, 1997). The years between the 7th and 10th grades have been shown to be a period of particular vulnerability for juveniles and a critical time for parents and teachers alike to be in touch with what is happening with a student (Dishion, et al., 1991). It has often been the practice of public policy decision makers to be increasingly punitive with delinquent youth, excluding them from educational opportunities and thus further distancing them from the mainstream of public education (Parsons, 2005).

Numerous school systems across the United States also use some form of alternative school setting for disruptive students in an attempt to stem the tide of academic failure. These alternative school programs may be operated by either the local school system, or be contracted through a private provider. In far too many instances, these programs focus almost entirely on behavior management with little attention paid to offering meaningful curricula to juveniles who most need it. Despite the popularity of alternative programs, there is little evidence that they have been effective in keeping students in school and out of the juvenile justice system (Tobin & Sprague, 2000). Some school districts, such as Seminole County Florida, require juveniles exiting incarceration to first attend an alternative placement before being allowed to return to their home school.

Even the school atmosphere itself can have a major impact on the propensity of juveniles to turn to criminal behavior. Many public officials now hold the belief that the fight against juvenile crime actually begins in school. This involves teachers understanding the issues facing today's youth and finding ways to reach troubled juveniles before they become lost in the system (Maxwell, 2006). Research has demonstrated that the educational environment in early childhood settings that is more teacher directed rather than child centered, can lead to higher tendencies for antisocial and delinquent behavior in adolescence (Mills, Cole, Jenkins & Dale, 2002). Providing the right balance between a structured environment conducive to learning without seeming to be overly harsh is a major challenge for educators in the juvenile justice system. The policies and administrative practices of a school can either increase the risk for court involvement, or reduce it, depending on how policies are developed and implemented (Christie, Jolivet & Nelson, 2005). In some instances, teachers often assume a role that in many ways has them acting as alternatives to the courts, intervening before youth become involved in more serious negative behaviors (Figdor, 1998). The recent development of zero tolerance policies by schools has negated some of this, but many teachers still find themselves acting as advocates for troubled students.

Overview

When juveniles are incarcerated in Florida, they are assigned to a program restrictiveness level based on their criminal history and committing offense. After they are adjudicated guilty, youth are then assigned to a period of residential incarceration of up to 36 months in duration. There are many factors that will influence a youth's

willingness and ability to make serious changes in their life style. Program components such as counseling, education, and transition planning all contribute to a juvenile's integration back into school and the greater society, and risk level for recidivating. The ability to meet specialized individual educational needs of incarcerated youth is also vital to successfully returning to the mainstream of the community.

Education and transition planning for a youth's return to his community have been found to be critical factors contributing to a successful reintegration (O'Rourke & Satterfield, 2005). With recidivism rates as high as 50%, this is no small matter. The best programs appear to be those that can effectively wrap behavior modification and counseling around a strong educational component. Transition planning and implementation has also garnered a great deal of importance as a key strategy as part of a youth's incarceration experience (Abrams, Shannon & Sangalang, 2008). The degree to which services are designed to support the educational program plays a significant role in assisting juveniles in their quest for a successful return to their communities (Mazzotti & Higgins, 2006).

There are other important factors to consider when examining the juvenile justice system. There is a clear over representation of minorities in the juvenile justice system. For example, African American males typically comprise more than 60% of the juveniles residing in residential confinement centers (Hellriegel & Yates, 1999). The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1988 (P.L. 93-415, 42 USC 5601 et seq.) requires states desiring federal funding to examine the proportion of juvenile minorities in confinement and determine if that proportion exceeds the general population. Despite these mandates, there has been little effort made to address the issue and achieve

reductions in the disproportionate representation of minorities in the juvenile justice system (Cabaniss, Frabutt, Kendrick & Arbuckle, 2007). Youth with disabling conditions also make up a disproportionate percentage of the incarcerated juvenile population. The economic status of juveniles is often times a strong predictor of potential involvement in the juvenile justice system. Profiles of incarcerated juveniles reveal a consistent background of poverty leading to criminal behavior in an effort to escape from its grasp (Johnson, 1999).

While the population of youth with a disabling condition in the K-12 system has consistently hovered around 10%, juveniles with disabilities can make up as much as 32% of the incarcerated delinquent population (Leone, Quinn & Rutherford, 2001). Mental retardation, behavior disorders, emotional disorders, and learning disabilities account for the vast majority of disabling conditions afflicting incarcerated juveniles (Langelett & Zenz, 2004). Youth with a diagnosis of mental retardation have been found to comprise between 2% and 10% of the incarcerated population (Rapport & Robinson, 1999). In Florida, 36% of the juveniles in residential placement have a diagnosis of a learning disability (Chester, et. al., 2002).

For public and private providers of programs for incarcerated juveniles, these prevailing issues pose a number of challenges across the entire spectrum of service provision, especially education. There are legal mandates that require providers to offer very specific services, including the areas of special education, social welfare and mental health services. Further, research has demonstrated a correlation between poorly developed social and communication skills and the propensity to become involved in the juvenile justice system (Lagelett & Zenz, 2004). These same underdeveloped social and

communication skills have also been linked to a greater tendency to drop out of school, become involved with substance abuse, and other factors that have been shown to lead to criminal behavior (Stenhjem, 2005). Arrest records also reveal that juveniles with poor social and communications skills as the result of a learning disability are far more likely to be arrested than those without (Winters, 1997).

Education for Incarcerated Youth

The education of delinquent youth in the United States has evolved significantly over the past 250 years. Long removed from the purely punitive ways of the Puritans which often included the possibility of a troubled youth being sent into indentured servitude, incarcerated juveniles now enjoy numerous legal protections (Keeley, 2004). Starting with Public Law 94-142 in 1975, educating incarcerated youth is a requirement, not an option for institutions housing juvenile delinquents. Conflicting with this mandate is the prevailing perception that within the juvenile justice system the current philosophy is to focus on punishment and incarceration rather than rehabilitation and education (Mazzotti & Higgins, 2006). Statistics consistently reveal that most juveniles will not earn their high school diploma before they complete their confinement, thus defining their need to return to school (Keeley, 2006).

Youth in the juvenile justice system not only have a history of poor academic achievement, they also possess inadequate coping skills. Often, they have also had frustrating experiences in the special education setting (Wood, Wood & Mullins, 2008). For a youth to be successful when he is released back into society, it is important for him to make educational gains and perceive tangible achievement while he is incarcerated

(Keeley, 2006). In many instances, the goal is to work towards obtaining a high school credential, i.e. their high school diploma. Learning to read while incarcerated is also critical in making the transition back into public school (Vacca, 2008). For students who are academically capable, this approach has been appropriate and generally successful. For students with low skills, there is a need to provide them with opportunities to develop a life skill that will better equip them for the future (Casey, 1996).

Successful participation in an educational program while incarcerated offers juveniles the opportunity to acquire the skills held in the highest regard and demand by society (Winters, 1997). In recent years, a greater emphasis on the importance of vocational training has come to the forefront. In response to laws such as No Child Left Behind (P.L. 107-110), increasing attention is now being paid to providing special education services for eligible youth as part of a more comprehensive approach to offering education in the juvenile justice system (O'Rourke & Satterfield, 2005). Indeed, the stated intent of No Child Left Behind is to provide all students, including those incarcerated, with the best possible instructional practices that have been validated through research (Wang, Blomberg & Li, 2005).

While there are significant differences in service provision across states, it is routinely the responsibility of the public school system to ensure educational services are being provided for incarcerated youth. School systems have the option of providing instruction themselves, or contracting them out to a qualified provider. In some states, Georgia for example, the responsibility for educating incarcerated juveniles is a function of the education division within the juvenile justice system. In Arizona, the education of youth in the juvenile justice system falls under the purview of the juvenile court.

Historically, juvenile justice education programs have been plagued by inadequate communication and collaboration between agencies involved with a youth once he enters the system (Burk & Keeley, 2002). Records often times are lost or become missing as a youth is transferred across the juvenile justice system. Over the course of recent years, there has been a greater demand for improving the quality of educational programs offered to incarcerated juveniles. School officials are encouraged to communicate with juvenile justice providers in order to be able to fully understand and be prepared for a youth's specific academic needs (Wood, Wood & Mullins, 2008). In Pennsylvania, this demand for educational accountability has prompted the State Department of Education to place juvenile justice educational services out for competitive bid in the hope that the quality and scope of service will be improved (Burk & Keeley, 2002).

The productive working relationships between those entities providing services to youth is critical in order to meet all of the educational mandates required for incarcerated juveniles. Across the entire juvenile justice realm, there are requirements that must be met, of which education is but a single component; one that must be provided in conjunction with other services intended to support the educational process. Youth are far more likely to be successful while incarcerated, and later upon their release, if a full range of academic and social services can be designed to meet their needs (Gehring, 2005).

Students entering the juvenile justice system often bring long histories of mostly unproductive experiences in the public schools (Rider-Hankins, 1992). Records following these students into their incarcerated educational setting are often incomplete or missing entirely because the youth has been in and out of school so frequently that their records

do not catch up with them (Langelett & Zenz, 2005). In other instances, some states have incorrectly interpreted the provisions of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and as a result have been reluctant or resistant to sharing student records. FERPA clearly permits sharing a juvenile's academic records between approved state agencies involved with that youth (Robinson & Rapport, 1999).

Many programs have become particularly adept at merging the facility's behavior management system with the educational program. Factors designed to motivate a student's active participation in the education program are utilized in combination with instruction focused on the development of positive life and social skills. With almost half of the incarcerated juvenile population deemed to have emotional and behavioral disabilities, this merger of program components in a mutually supporting manner is a major factor in effective service delivery.

Attendance is also a typical required component of any program design and certainly part of any commitment order assigning a juvenile to residential confinement. Many juveniles have been out of the educational mainstream for so long that in many instances the first task is to simply get them focused to the point where they can make the adjustment to being in the classroom again and function effectively (Ingersoll & LeBoeuf, 1997). Often times, half the battle is to get these juveniles interested in school again by ensuring they experience tangible success early in their commitment. Juveniles with long term commitments are also frequently enrolled in some form of vocational program which provides them with the opportunity to acquire skills to be successful in a trade industry after their release (O'Rourke & Satterfield, 2005).

There are numerous approaches to providing educational services for incarcerated juveniles. Common threads are beginning to emerge, the most important of these being that the students who are incarcerated have a wide range of needs beyond traditional academic programming. The laws guiding services for these youth have also become more directive and explicit in what is required and programs are scrambling to find ways to meet these demands (Leone, Quinn & Rutherford, 2001). Additionally, laws governing the provision of educational services to incarcerated juveniles, coupled with court supported recognition of a youth's legal rights, have placed stress on already stretched financial and human resources as programs strive to meet legal mandates.

Juveniles with Learning Disabilities

Juveniles with learning and other disabilities comprise an over-represented sector of the incarcerated juvenile population needing educational services (Nelson & Quinn, 2005). Estimates of students in juvenile justice facilities with a disabling condition range from a low of 12% of the population to as high as 70% of all incarcerated youth (Bullis, Havel & Yovanoff, 2004). The type of disability differs among youth, with high instances of emotional issues, behavioral problems, and mental retardation being the most prevalent among incarcerated juveniles. Juveniles involved in the juvenile justice system also commonly manifest anger management issues, substance abuse concerns, and low self esteem as part of a the set of problems they bring with them into incarceration (Burk & Keeley, 2002).

Research has historically not focused much attention on the prevalence of mental illness in juveniles who are incarcerated. The incidence of mental illness among

incarcerated juveniles is two to three times higher than that found in juveniles in the general population. Suicide rates are four times higher for youth that are incarcerated than it is for their peers in the general population (Williamson, Bell, Dwyer & Frierson, 2007).

Research has tended to show that there is a strong relationship between youth having one or more disability and their likelihood of becoming involved in the juvenile or even criminal justice systems (Leone, Quinn & Rutherford, 2005). This issue is critical in that schools must be challenged to do a better job of identifying these students with disabilities and providing them with support services that will reduce the chances of legal system involvement (Stenhjem, 2005). Clear evidence exists that shows students with untreated disabilities are far more likely to experience failure in school and therefore be at greater risk for involvement in the juvenile justice system than those students whose disabilities are identified and subsequently treated (Langelett & Zenz, 2004).

The vast majority of research on learning disabilities among incarcerated juveniles has been conducted with delinquent youth living in long term residential placements. Far less is known about the impact of learning disabilities for youth involved in other parts of the juvenile justice system including probation, detention and shorter term residential commitments (O'Brien, Langhinrichsen-Rohling & Shelley-Tremblay, 2007). Incarcerated youth with disabilities will benefit from educational programs that are specifically designed to work with their disabilities. Juveniles with learning disabilities present a different set of challenges for practitioners. These youth require significant collaboration between the courts, institutions and schools in order to offer effective academic remedies for their prevailing issues (Bachara & Zaba, 2001). The main reason for this is simply that experiencing success while incarcerated will

significantly increase the chances that they will return to school upon release which in turn reduces their chances of further involvement in the juvenile justice system (Blomberg, Blomberg, Waldo, Pesta & Bellows, 2006). Because individual program practices in meeting the special needs of incarcerated juveniles differs greatly, the quality of educational programs is sporadic and uneven (Blomberg, et al., 2006). The tendency to separate juveniles with disabilities in order to provide them with a better chance for success has received some favor from school districts and delinquency programs serving these youth.

While there have been demonstrated benefits for the juvenile justice educational system, complying with the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Act and No Child Left Behind creates a significant obstacle in trying to establish alternative learning programs (Atkins, Bullis & Todis, 2003). The significant amount of legal litigation over the past couple of decades indicates that juvenile justice programs have been doing less than an admirable job of providing appropriate educational experiences for incarcerated youth with disabilities (Leone, Quinn & Rutherford, 2001). Trying to meet the mandates of No Child Left Behind in a way that is also consistent and supportive of programming components while still serving the individual needs of a juvenile with disabilities has proven to be a major challenge for juvenile justice practitioners (Platt, Casey, & Faessel, 2006).

It has also been demonstrated that the more effective juvenile justice education programs promote family involvement in the youth's education, not only in planning for release, but also while he is engaged in his academic program during incarceration (Stenhjem, 2005). The provision of necessary support mechanisms that compliment the

educational experience has also been shown to have a positive impact on a youth's ability to be successful academically during his or her incarceration. Bachara and Zaba (2001) state that the real question is not whether delinquency and learning disabilities have a positive relationship, the real challenge is to identify the real issues and offer the appropriate intervention. By offering "wrap-around" services such as mental health or substance abuse counseling in addition to the academic component, incarcerated juveniles with disabilities are experiencing far greater success than their peers not receiving those services when they return to their communities (Stenhjem, 2005). Only about 60% of juvenile justice programs offer counseling for incarcerated youth despite research that supports its effectiveness in providing a meaningful experience. (Leone, Quinn & Rutherford, 2001).

Instructional Staff and the Learning Environment

How the learning environment is established is another inconsistent practice across juvenile justice education programs. Teachers in juvenile justice programs work with some of the most complex and challenging students found in any academic setting (Houchins, Shippen & Cattret, 2004). While most teachers are certified in a particular field of instruction, very few have been found to be specifically certified to teach special education (Leone, Quinn & Rutherford, 2001). In Florida, teachers in juvenile justice facilities must meet the same certification requirements as their counterparts in the public schools. This certification is also critical in light of the increasing number of juveniles being sent to adult prisons with staff that know little if anything about appropriate curriculum for high school aged students (Hayes, 1997).

There are however, factors that make meeting these legal and credentialing requirements difficult at best. Rural locations have the challenge of finding qualified teachers to teach in remote program sites. The demands of No Child Left Behind (P.L. 107-110) will continue to place pressure on juvenile justice education programs to employ teachers with credentials reflecting their expertise in working with students with disabilities and special needs (Blomberg, et al., 2006). Teacher attrition rates are particularly high in the juvenile justice environment when compared to the traditional K-12 system.

Job satisfaction has been demonstrated to play a key role in retaining teachers who are willing to work with incarcerated juvenile students. Juvenile Justice programs are often plagued with numerous issues that occur outside of the school setting but frequently spill over into the classroom and hinder the learning process (Crosby, Shippen & Jolivette, 2009). These issues can erode staff morale, especially the instructional staff. Keeping effective teachers in juvenile justice education programs is an important factor in providing hope for a youth's successful return to mainstream society. Teachers have a profound impact on their students in the juvenile justice system in ways that transcend how classes are taught or even a student's background (Houchins, Shippen & Jolivette, 2006).

The most effective juvenile justice teachers understand that the entire learning experience for an incarcerated youth occurs within the cultural reality of incarceration. If youth are to benefit from classroom instruction while they are in residential commitment, their entire treatment experience must be wrapped into the educational setting, especially in the case of female delinquents (Fejes & Miller, 2002). These teachers also understand

that in most instances, traditional classroom instructional techniques are inadequate for incarcerated juveniles since these same methods were ineffective while the juveniles were in public school.

It is also interesting to note, that most residential program models are grouped based on their design. Incarcerated juveniles are taught group techniques in the hope that the skills learned in group will transition over into their interactions with their peers. Recent research however, has shown that the group model may actually work against juveniles as they try and change their behaviors. There are indications that juveniles learn negative and anti-social behavior from their peers, especially in institutionalized settings (Dodge, Thomas, J. & Lansford, J, 2006). This would work against objectives of the vast majority of juvenile justice program models. It also highlights the importance of well trained teachers and staff that work collaboratively on behalf of the juveniles in a program.

The academic and social needs of incarcerated juveniles are considerably different from their peers in public schools. These juveniles need constant reinforcement when they have performed well. Interviews with juveniles exiting residential placement often reveal that they liked programs with highly structured academic environments (Mincey, et. al, 2008). Incarcerated juveniles often need remedial education, especially in reading. Strong programs help students develop pro-social skills through small group work that can also be utilized in the classroom environment. It is critical that teachers and all program staff effectively model the behaviors they are trying to instill in the juveniles so they are learned through positive interactions between youth and adults (Houchins, Jolivette, Wessendorf, McGlynn & Nelson, 2005). Educators within the juvenile justice

setting have expressed concerns over the lack of support they receive from program staff (Crosby, Shippen & Jolivette, 2009).

Much of the current research reflects that the use of certified teachers generally translates into more effective educational programs. In Florida, 79% of the teachers in state operated juvenile justice programs were professionally certified as opposed to 33% in privately operated programs. When the results of the Juvenile Justice Educational Enhancement Program's annual quality assurance reviews were tabulated, the state operated programs performed noticeably better across all standards than privately operated programs.

As the result of recent class action law suits, the design of juvenile justice facilities has undergone a metamorphosis. Some states, Florida included, were mandated to reduce their incarcerated juvenile population. Florida's response to this mandate was to build larger, more secure institutions housing 150 plus juveniles in a single facility, thus creating an environment more closely resembling that of an adult prison rather than a place for the rehabilitation of delinquent juveniles (Chester, et al., 2002). Subsequent quality assurance evaluations showed that the educational component in these facilities suffered, dropping in many instances lower than those earned by smaller institutions (Chester, et al., 2002).

Transition Planning

A key theme that has emerged in recent research pertaining to youth in the juvenile justice system is that of transition planning. It has become apparent that proper planning for a juvenile's release back into the community is a vital component in

attempting to ensure a successful transition. Knowing that as many as half of the juvenile offenders that are released from custody will commit additional crimes and return to the system calls even greater attention to the need for a well thought out transition plan that will guide the youth and his probation officers (Bullis, Havel & Yovanoff, 2004). If support services similar to the ones the youth experienced while incarcerated can be put into place, the chances for a successful re-entry back into the community increase significantly (Stenhjem, 2005).

Effective transition planning also promotes positive community engagement by youth. It also creates a sense of civic ownership among all of the individuals and agencies who have a vested interest in seeing the juvenile succeed and share in a common mission of making their neighborhood safer (Francisco & Bremby, 2001). With much younger, pre-teen juveniles entering the system, juvenile justice practitioners now must consider transition strategies for youth returning to middle school (Black, 2009). Despite the positive results that have been demonstrated from strong transition planning, this continues to be an area that programs serving juvenile delinquents continue to perform poorly in the QA standards. In Florida for example, the evaluation standard for education programs consistently receiving the lowest rating has been transition planning (Chester, et al., 2002).

It is also of vital importance that schools where formerly incarcerated juveniles will be returning to understand the challenges these students face. Utilizing an approach that closely monitors a youth during their return to school offers greater accountability concerning behavior and the need to make adjustments to the aftercare treatment plan (DeAngelo, 2007). In many instances these transitioning students will be dealing with

less than receptive administrations not to mention negative peer groups, family concerns, and pre-existing histories of poor academic performance (Mazzotti & Higgins, 2006). If plans can be developed that create links for juveniles so that they receive the support they need in order to immediately engage in work or school upon release, the chances of their returning to the juvenile justice system declines sharply (Bullis & Yovanoff, 2005).

Research has demonstrated that recidivism is not determined by a rigid set of factors, but rather is dependent on a number of variables that influence a youth's decision to commit another crime and risk returning to the juvenile justice system (Baltodano, Mathur & Rutherford, 2005). Part of developing an effective transition plan includes identifying the specific variables that first influenced the juvenile to commit the crime(s) that placed him into the juvenile justice system in the first place (Baltodano, Mathur & Rutherford, 2005). If collaboration among all entities involved with the youth is productive, a youth's chances for a successful transition will be greatly increased (Mazzotti & Higgins, 2006).

Youth in the juvenile justice system have long term issues that require a concerted effort to develop effective strategies that will optimize the chances of successful transition back into the community following their release from incarceration (O'Rourke & Satterfield, 2005). The development of a student transition plan should contain elements specific to a youth's needs and will help promote engagement in school and/or employment. In many programs now, the planning for the day of release begins at the very moment the juvenile enters into the facility (O'Rourke & Satterfield, 2005). Based on an individual youth's needs, contacts must be established in order to have the necessary links in place when the juvenile is released. This is particularly important when

the juvenile's plan calls for a return to public school. Teaching students to assume a greater role and responsibility for their future has also been shown to be a key part of planning for a juvenile's return to school or even adulthood (Houchins, 2001). Often times juveniles returning from the juvenile justice system are treated with resistance by school administrators who do not want them back in their schools for fear that the youth's previously disruptive behavior will return (Hellriegel & Yates, 1999).

Once they are released back into the community, juveniles will need guidance, and perhaps equally importantly, support in their efforts to return to public school or search for employment (O'Rourke & Satterfield, 2005). By ensuring that all of the key players are involved in the development of a youth's transition plan, the collaborative efforts of everyone working together will build a solid foundation for success. Parents, school officials, program education staff, and juvenile probation officers are critical figures who should be part of building a juvenile's release plan.

Research has demonstrated that those programs offering intensive educational programming and intervention in the youth's prevailing issues while still incarcerated can lead to a more successful re-entry experience, not only pertaining to school, but also with family and peer groups (Baltodano, Platt & Roberts, 2005). The most effective programs have developed closely knit responses that promote increased access to services across the entire system and therefore also maximize resources while possibly even creating new services to better help the school and community work with the youth (Tapper, Kleinman & Nakashian, 1997). It is also important to plan for a youth's post secondary education. The most effective programs ensure that youth are encouraged to think strongly about

their future and give significant consideration to pursuing opportunities in higher education (DeAngelo, 2006).

As new legislation is passed that mandates additional educational requirements for incarcerated juveniles, providers of juvenile justice programming will need to pay closer attention to a youth's specific needs as they are identified during his incarceration (Blomberg, et al., 2006). Support services that address a student's substance abuse issues for example would be vital to not having that issue reoccur and sabotage the youth's return to the community. Developing a support system of adults who can mentor and advocate for a youth would be tantamount to facilitating his successful return to his community (Garfinkel & Nelson, 2004). As part of transition planning, it is also important that the juvenile justice system and local public schools develop effective and cooperative working relationships to best serve juveniles while they are incarcerated and upon their return to their home school (Hellriegel & Yates, 1999). Transition planning that effectively coordinates interwoven support services will maximize existing resources that are becoming increasingly scarce as budgets continue to be pared (Tapper, Kleinman & Nakashian, 1997).

Youth with disabilities exiting the juvenile justice system are especially in need of a well thought out transition plan with all of the necessary support services clearly identified and in place (Garfinkel & Nelson, 2004). Facilities are required to ensure that a juvenile's Individual Education Plan (IEP) is up to date and that the services the youth has been receiving are appropriate and well documented. Evaluations of a juvenile's learning disability must also be current and forwarded to the receiving school so services can either be continued or provided if they were not during the youth's incarceration

(Winters, 1997). In far too many instances, juveniles with learning disabilities transition out of the system with poor plans and mostly uncoordinated support services, often times leading quickly to recidivism (Baltodano, Mathur & Rutherford, 2005).

The ultimate goal of transition planning, especially in the case of juvenile delinquents with learning disabilities, is to alter the influencing factors that might lead a youth back into criminal behavior (Baltodano, Mathur & Rutherford, 2005). This is where the importance of coordinated support services is perhaps most critical. Besides dealing with a learning disability, a youth returning to his community often times must also navigate family stress, low income, previous academic failure, negative peer groups, dismal opportunities for gainful employment, and a host of other potentially damaging issues. The influencing factors beyond a juvenile's disabilities must be carefully examined and interventions built into the transition plan in order to effectively manage his return to public school (Baltodano, Mathur & Rutherford, 2005). Juveniles benefiting from effective transition planning have a much lower risk of recidivating than their less fortunate peers who have not enjoyed the same preparation.

Juvenile Justice Education and the Law

Over the course of the last thirty years legislation protecting the educational rights of incarcerated juveniles has become increasingly prescriptive. In 1975, Congress passed the Comprehensive Education Law for Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 94-142). This act was the first comprehensive law providing for equal education opportunities for children with disabilities. The intent of P.L.94-142 was to ensure that children with disabilities received special education services as provided for by law. The scope of the law also

included juveniles up to the age of 21 who were incarcerated and often times not receiving adequate or appropriate educational services (Winters, 1997).

This law has been amended several times to address inadequacies and was subsequently renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (P.L. 105-17) in 1990. IDEA mandated that incarcerated juveniles had the right to a free and appropriate public education, including those youth with disabilities, in the least restrictive setting (Robinson & Rapport, 1999). In 1997 additional amendments were added to the law that contained significant revisions to the requirements for providing equal education for students with disabilities. Within IDEA are mandates that require local school systems to demonstrate to the United States Department of Education (USDOE) that policies and procedures are in place that meet the intent of the law and provide for the educational needs of students with disabilities.

Starting with P.L. 94-142 in 1975, the law has made it clear that a juvenile's right to an education does not terminate upon incarceration (Robinson & Rapport, 1999). Every incarcerated juvenile with a diagnosed disability as defined by IDEA is entitled to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act also mandates that incarcerated juveniles with disabilities be educated with their peer group to the greatest extent possible. And while the court has recognized that there are instances where safety and security may preclude this to some extent, it has far more often ruled on the side of meeting the requirement that youth receive their education in the least restrictive setting (Robinson & Rapport, 1999). The record over the past 20 years shows that numerous juvenile correctional institutions have been slow to respond to the mandates of IDEA; many not implementing appropriate educational

services until after legal action was initiated and suits brought forward (Quinn, Rutherford & Leone, 2001). Since the 1980s the United States Department of Justice has been taking legal action against state and local government agencies for failing to provide adequate educational services for incarcerated juveniles (Crosby, Shippen & Jolivet, 2009). Information from The Florida Department of Education suggests that legislative mandates from the state and federal level are not generally being met in programs responsible for the education of incarcerated juveniles (Chester, et al., 2002).

As the driving legislation behind the actual provision of education services for incarcerated juveniles, IDEA contains several important provisions for institutions and school systems responsible for a confined youth's education. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) covers all state and local juvenile and adult correctional facilities in terms of providing appropriate educational services for incarcerated students. IDEA provides for several processes in order to ensure that the juvenile is receiving his education in compliance with his or her legal rights. There is an entire team of individuals who must be involved in the planning of services for the juvenile. And while IDEA requires parental involvement, and it is certainly a critical component, the harsh reality is that most programs have experienced significant challenges in getting parents to participate in this process (Robinson & Rapport, 1999).

IDEA requires that if a youth entering into the juvenile justice system has an existing and current Individual Education Plan, the receiving institution must secure that IEP as quickly as possible. If the youth does not have an IEP but has been diagnosed with a learning disability, then one must be developed within clearly defined time frames. The IEP must also be immediately implemented and reviewed and evaluated at routine

intervals. Because IDEA requires more specialized educational and transitional services for students with disabilities, the goals of the Individual Education Plan will closely mirror the goals established for the juvenile by the court system (Burrell & Warboys, 2000). The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act also specifies that the juvenile's IEP includes detailed information regarding his transition back into school, especially concerning the types of academic coursework he or she will need to be successful.

Florida law mandates that the district the youth resides in during his period of incarceration provide the educational services. This means that if a youth's assigned institution for his or her incarceration is in a county other than where he or she normally lives, the district overseeing the program is the responsible entity for juvenile justice educational services. Because the juvenile justice system is often a state system outside of the public school system, educational policy and practice can cause problems in such areas as transferring student records to a juvenile correctional facility (Wilhite & Cessna, 1996). In Florida, written agreements exist that make it easier to transfer a juvenile's records from the school system to the institution and back again (Chester, et al., 2002). Legislation in a number of states mandates that agencies involved with the youth must collaborate, including the sharing and transfer of juvenile academic records in order to better facilitate service delivery (Hellriegel & Yates, 1999).

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act also requires due process protection be in place along with provisions for parents and students to be able to participate in mediation procedures in order to resolve disputes concerning the juvenile's education. The due process procedure must be entirely separate from that of the

institution where the juvenile is incarcerated. IDEA also requires that these procedures be in written form and provided to both the juvenile and his parents or legal guardian.

There are other related legislative and legal requirements pertaining to the quality of educational services and an incarcerated juvenile's right to those services. Title II within the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-336) (ADA) mandates that incarcerated juveniles with disabilities receive specialized services during the course of their confinement (Quinn, Rutherford & Leone, 2001). The equal protection clause of the 14th amendment of the United States Constitution has also been utilized to ensure that incarcerated youth receive their educational rights. Section 504 of the Rehabilitative Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794) also assures incarcerated juveniles of their right to a free and appropriate public education (Langelett & Zenz, 2004).

All providers of educational services in the juvenile justice system, be they public or private, are subject to the mandates of No Child Left Behind (P.L. 107-110) (NCLB). The intent of this law has been to require the delivery of the most promising instructional practices when providing education programs for delinquent juveniles with the ultimate goal of increasing their chances for success upon their release from incarceration (Gehring, 2005). Because practices differ so greatly among institutions providing educational programs for incarcerated juveniles, there has been a consistent lack of policy directing how services should be offered (Blomberg, et al., 2006). NCLB requires that education programs demonstrate gains across a number of categories and service providers have found themselves struggling with how to meet these provisions with the limited financial resources they have available.

As with the other laws governing educational services for incarcerated juveniles, NCLB places a great deal of importance on transition planning and providing for a youth's return to public school. No Child Left Behind also requires that all juvenile justice schools be routinely evaluated, including the academic progress within the institution. The requirements of NCLB pertaining to demonstrating student progress also include acquiring high school credits, completing a degree, and planning for a return to school if appropriate (Blomberg, et al., 2006). Florida's system of educating incarcerated juveniles has consistently demonstrated that it does a credible job of meeting the major mandates of NCLB (Blomberg, et al., 2006). There are a number of states however, that have been reporting that they have not been able to determine if incarcerated juveniles are meeting the standards pertaining to achieving yearly progress (Gehring, 2005). There are states that have not collected all of the required information while still others have filed for exemptions from the mandates of No Child Left Behind as they pertain to educating incarcerated juveniles.

Juvenile Justice Education Case Law

Many juvenile justice programs, indeed the vast majority of them, have for a number of years ignored federal law relating to the educational rights of incarcerated juveniles or have done a poor job of providing the required elements. The number of class action lawsuits over the past two decades alone testifies to this point (Quinn, Rutherford & Leone, 2001). Starting with P.L. 94-142, it has been a federal mandate that incarcerated juveniles receive a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive

environment. The failure to provide such an education has far reaching implications including legal action as well as the possibility of losing federal funding.

Green v. Johnson (1981) was part of a class action suit claiming that the state failed to provide the appropriate educational services for incarcerated youth. The suit alleged that a youth was being denied his protected right to a free and appropriate public education. The court ruled in favor of the youth holding that being incarcerated did not take away his rights to a free public education as provided for in state and federal law (Robinson & Rapport, 1999).

In *T.G. v. Board of Education of Piscataway* (1983), the court was asked to rule on the rights of a juvenile who claimed he was entitled to counseling services. His contention was rooted in his belief that the counseling services would support and even enhance his educational program. The courts ruled that the youth was entitled to access counseling services so he could better benefit from his educational program. The court also ruled that the counseling services must be provided by qualified staff (Robinson & Rapport, 1999).

The disproportionate number of juveniles with disabilities in the juvenile justice system within South Carolina was addressed in *Alexander v. Boyd* (1995). In this case, the court found that the number of youth with disabilities in the juvenile justice system was inappropriately high. The court ordered the Department of Juvenile Justice to identify and evaluate all youth entitled to special education services (Robinson & Rapport, 1999). Florida was similarly forced to address and reduce its incarcerated juvenile population through the *Bobby M.* consent decree which subsequently led to building larger and more secure facilities for these youth (Chester, et al., 2002).

The issue of what constitutes a free and appropriate public education for incarcerated juveniles has also been the focal point of several legal actions. In *Donnell v. Illinois Board of Education*, a juvenile successfully claimed his rights to a free public education were being denied. He argued that restrictions placed on his access to classes violated his rights of due process and equal protection under the law (Robinson & Rapport, 1999).

There have been instances where the courts have upheld a decision to incarcerate a youth while somewhat limiting his access to a totally free and appropriate public education. In *Christopher V. T.* (1994) a juvenile with an emotional disability cited his right to a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment in order to avoid serving his commitment. The youth wanted his hearing cancelled since it would adversely impact his access to a free public education. The court denied his claim, citing that the hearing was to determine his level of incarceration while considering his right to an education in the least restrictive environment and the safety of the juvenile's community (Robinson & Rapport, 1999).

Juvenile Recidivism

There are numerous reasons why juveniles commit new offenses after they have been released from their residential commitment. Juvenile crime and the high frequency at which youth re-offend continue to be significant concerns for policy makers at all levels of government (Mincey, et. al, 2008). There has been some research that suggests the severity of the youth's committing offense may have some relationship with their potential to re-offend when released from incarceration. The largest number of juveniles

are incarcerated for misdemeanor offenses and may be more likely to recidivate than their counterparts incarcerated for felony offenses (Pallone & Hennessey, 1977). Recidivism can also be described with several definitions, although most typically it is defined as a youth committing a new offense within a year of their release from incarceration. The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice considers a youth to have recidivated if he or she is arrested or adjudicated guilty of a crime within one year following their release from residential placement. Others have defined recidivism as being arrested and the juvenile subsequently either pleading guilty or being found guilty at adjudication (Ryan & Yang, 2005).

Successfully returning delinquent juveniles to mainstream society after trying to meet their educational and social needs during their time of incarceration is a significant challenge for any provider (Keith & McCrary, 2002). With diversion programs such as the Juvenile Alternatives Sanctions Program (JASP) showing an alarming degree of ineffectiveness in preventing juvenile crime, the importance of a quality and positive educational experience while a juvenile is incarcerated is paramount to reducing further involvement with law enforcement (Rasmussen, 2004). Despite increased efforts to improve the educational services to incarcerated juveniles, the fact remains that they eventually return to their home communities, become involved with negative peers and have not as yet acquired the necessary skills to make appropriate choices under pressure (Evans, Brown & Killian, 2002).

Because of the high rate at which juveniles re-offend, developing effective intervention strategies that are aimed at mitigating the factors that influence negative behavior is critical to ensuring a youth's successful return to their home community

(Sheperd, Green & Omobien, 2005). Identifying a youth's driving issues while he or she is still in their juvenile justice education program is an essential component in planning for their transition. When planning for follow-up or aftercare services, identifying the individual factors placing a youth at risk for further delinquent behavior significantly reduces the chances of recidivism (Ryan & Yang, 2005). Assessment instruments such as the Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale help professionals working in the juvenile justice field aid in predicting a youth's propensity for further involvement in the legal system.

Reducing juvenile recidivism can have a positive economic impact on a community as well. When youth commit new crimes after their release from incarceration, the result is further residential placement for longer periods of time costing additional tax dollars to support. Data from the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (FDJJ) shows that a 4% reduction in recidivism between 1997 and 1999 netted almost \$65 million in fewer costs to victims and agencies involved with these youth (Christian, 2003).

The high rates at which juveniles recidivate have given rise to great concern for juvenile justice professionals and legislators alike. The apparent widespread lack of success across juvenile justice programming has led some to define delinquency in a juvenile as a disabling condition requiring long term treatment similar to helping youth with autism or mental retardation (Pasternack & Martinez, 1996). The education of incarcerated juveniles continues to receive ever increasing attention as professionals and state legislatures search for answers to stem the tide of juvenile recidivism. Indeed,

education for juvenile delinquents is a major provision of Title 1 of the No Child Left Behind Act (Christian, 2003).

Program Design and Evaluation

In Florida, once a juvenile has been adjudicated as delinquent, they are committed to a program type and level of restrictiveness based on their prior criminal history, if any, and the seriousness of the committing offense. The range of committed status ranges from level 2, non residential treatment, to a level 10 placement which carries with it a minimum incarceration period of 36 months. A level 4 program is a short term residential placement, usually about 4 months duration for young offenders or occasionally for youth stepping down from more restrictive placements. In Florida, these programs are typically wilderness programs designed to quickly get the attention of youth just entering the juvenile justice system. For the purposes of this study, levels 6 and 8 will be the primary focus in terms of examining the impact of juvenile justice education programs and any impact they may have on recidivism rates.

A level 6 commitment is designed for what the Department of Juvenile Justice terms as moderate risk offenders and the term of commitment is normally about 7 to 12 months in duration. Level 8 programs are for more serious juvenile offenders and involve longer periods of incarceration, typically 12 to 18 months. Level 6 programs are staff secure, meaning the doors cannot be locked, while level 8 programs are hardware secure. It is the quality assurance (QA) process and program standards in Florida that drive accountability for providing services for juveniles, including education, mandated by the legislature (Pesta, Respress, Major, Arazan & Coxe, 2002). The Department of Juvenile

Justice was formed in 1994 in order to monitor the quality of juvenile justice programming across Florida. In 1998, the Juvenile Justice Educational Enhancement Program (JJEED) was established to not only monitor the quality of juvenile justice educational programs, but to also conduct research on best practices in order to determine what works in achieving greater academic gains for incarcerated juveniles (Blomberg & Waldo, 2002).

Summary

Despite the fact that reports as far back as 1998 began recommending sweeping improvements to juvenile justice education programs, the quality of services offered to incarcerated juveniles has been uneven (Feinstein, 2002). Numerous studies have shown that a significant common characteristic among incarcerated juveniles is low reading levels that have been allowed to continue throughout their school experiences. Studies have shown that as many as 34% of incarcerated juveniles do not read above the 1st grade level (Vacca, 2008). The vast majority of juveniles in the system have had extremely poor and unsuccessful experiences in school before entering their educational program in the incarcerated environment (Mincey, et. al, 2008). Academic failure at the basic literacy levels has in many instances been demonstrated to result in alienation from school and ultimately involvement in delinquent activities (Wheldall & Watkins, 2004).

In Florida, incarcerated juveniles now have the ability to benefit from laws that hold juvenile justice education programs to essentially the same standards as those held in the K-12 system. Programs that did not make improvements in educational services found themselves involved in class action lawsuits. In Florida, the consent decree known

as *Bobby M.*, which was initiated in 1983, provided the impetus to initiate sweeping reforms for treating and educating incarcerated juveniles (Pesta, et al., 2002).

Unfortunately, the effort to reduce the incarcerated juvenile population has resulted in Florida constructing larger facilities to house juveniles bringing further issues in providing a safe environment for these youth (Chester, et al., 2002).

Over the course of recent years the need to provide quality educational services for incarcerated juveniles continues to garner greater attention. Accountability for the quality of educational services for incarcerated juveniles also continues to be a high priority (Hamilton, et. al, 2007). Because of high recidivism rates, and lack of success as students return to school, law makers are demanding results on the behalf of taxpayers. Building collaboration across all entities involved with a youth being released from incarceration is becoming increasingly important, and is in fact mandated through legislation in many instances. Collaboration is a key component to ensuring juveniles can successfully return to society and not commit additional crimes (Quinn & Nelson, 2005).

Recent legal litigation has served notice that providers of juvenile justice programs, including educational services are expected to meet the mandates of federal legislation such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and No Child Left Behind. The Quality Assurance Standards utilized by the State of Florida to evaluate juvenile justice educational programs focuses on the delivery of appropriate services for youth with learning disabilities. The standards also address the need for programs to be using trained and certified staff to deliver instruction in the residential setting.

The high rate that juveniles tend to re-offend has eroded public confidence in the juvenile justice system and spawned greater accountability practices (Bullis & Yovanoff,

2005). The emergence in Florida of the Juvenile Justice Educational Enhancement Program (JJEED) to evaluate the quality of juvenile justice education programs and study best practices is indicative of the focus on helping youth not commit further offenses upon release from incarceration. The United States Department of Education, recognizing the need for better research and analysis of trends in juvenile justice, has reached out to the correctional community by entering into collaborative arrangements with several correctional professional associations in an effort to share information, offer technical assistance, and provide training opportunities for program and data managers (Linton, 2006). Research regarding the impact of the quality of an incarcerated juvenile's educational experience and whether or not he re-offends is a timely issue worthy of greater attention and study.

The past year has shown an increase in juvenile crime after several years of decline. With unsatisfactory school experiences responsible for a significant number of the influencing factors as to why juveniles turn to criminal activity, even after incarceration, the need to examine the effectiveness of juvenile justice education programs is evident (Rider-Hankins, 1992). The public is frustrated with how frequently juveniles re-offend after their release from incarceration and are searching for ways that will help stop this dangerous trend. The Department of Juvenile Justice's Bureau of Quality Assurance and the Juvenile Justice Education Enhancement Program (JJEED) were created in part to build in accountability for programs providing treatment services for incarcerated youth. These entities, especially JJEED, were also established to conduct research into best practices and to share that information with all providers.

CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY

Introduction

At any given moment, there are nearly 10,000 incarcerated juveniles residing in residential facilities across Florida (Chester, et. al., 2002). These programs are held to eleven quality assurance standards, four of which specifically address education, which are reviewed on an annual basis by the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and the Department of Education (DOE). With recidivism rates as high as 70% in some programs, the presenting question in this research paper asks if the quality of a program's educational services as reviewed by the DOE influences a youth's tendency to re-offend. Juvenile delinquency and recidivism continue to be major points of debate among government officials at all levels (Mincey, et. al, 2008). Numerous youth turn to criminal activity out of frustration with their school experience (Wheldall & Watkins, 2004).

For the purposes of this study, both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect data to answer the four research questions. Secondary data provided by the Department of Juvenile Justice was utilized in the quantitative study and first hand data collected from interviews was used for the qualitative study. Education programs within the Juvenile Justice System are reviewed each year by staff from the Juvenile Justice Education Enhancement Program (JJEPP). JJEPP was created in 1998 to address the issues of educational program quality and to disseminate information regarding best practices (Blomberg & Waldo, 2001). Juvenile Justice programs with educational services are evaluated on four Quality Assurance Standards (QA) that cover the following areas: Transition, Service Delivery, Educational Resources and Contract Management.

Within these standards are key indicators that address specific requirements pertaining to the delivery of effective educational services for incarcerated juveniles.

JJEEP reviewers utilize both qualitative and quantitative methods in conducting their program reviews. Depending on program size, reviewers examine a specific number of student files and other documents to ensure that required elements are contained in the files. Because of the significant number of delinquent students in residential facilities with learning disabilities, perhaps as high as 36%, reviewers also look for documentation of those disabilities and that the program is meeting those specific needs (Chester, et. al., 2002).

JJEEP staff also conducts interviews with staff and students to better understand the experiences they are having in the educational program. The interviews help reviewers to see the program through the eyes of the students and to see if what they are finding in the documentation is what the student is experiencing. Reviewers also conduct classroom observations to triangulate the information they have gathered and compile the final report. In addition to conducting quality assurance reviews, the main mandate of the Juvenile Justice Enhancement Program is to conduct longitudinal studies regarding educational gains made by students while they are incarcerated and to examine the impact on recidivism and to validate via research the best instructional practices for juveniles in residential programs (Wang, Blomberg & Li, 2005).

When programs are evaluated, the final overall (mean) score they are awarded falls into one of the following categories: *Superior*, *High Satisfactory*, *Satisfactory*, *Marginal Satisfactory*, *Below Satisfactory*, and *Unsatisfactory*. These designations are based on earning a specific percentage of the possible score in each standard and then

being combined into a mean program score. Reviewers use the Education Quality Assurance Standards to conduct reviews and assign numeric values to describe program performance. Within each of the four standards are key indicators that reflect desired practice which the program is evaluated against. Each indicator is rated on the following scale: Superior Performance (7,8,9 points); Satisfactory Performance (4,5,6 points); Partial Performance (1,2,3 points); and Non-Performance (0 points). It is possible therefore, for a program to sometimes receive a mean score in the *Satisfactory* range while performing poorly in an individual standard. Likewise, a program could receive a poor mean score while performing well in a single standard. This could mean that the overall score a program earns may not always be fully indicative of the quality of educational programming it is providing to the youth in that particular institution.

With so many youth committing additional crimes after they are released, many states have passed legislation making it easier for juveniles to be placed in the adult correctional system (Poirier, 2004). It is pertinent therefore, to ensure that youth receive the best possible educational services while they are incarcerated to maximize the potential for a successful return to society while still involved in the juvenile justice system. If juveniles do not receive adequate educational services while they are incarcerated, the chances of re-offending are greatly increased upon their release from a program (Portner, 1996). In Florida, the QA standards and review process are what drive the accountability for educational programs meeting legislative mandates (Pesta, et. al., 2002).

Statement of the Problem

Each year, the Florida Legislature appropriates millions of public tax dollars for juvenile justice programs and services. Since 1998, there has been an increasing call for program quality and accountability outcomes (Chester, et al., 2002). The tax-paying citizens of Florida want the problem of juvenile delinquency solved, and more specifically, the concern over the high rates at which juveniles commit new crimes after incarceration. Policy makers, legislators and the citizens of Florida want to be confident that the funds appropriated to educate incarcerated juveniles are accomplishing the task. Juvenile crime and recidivism in particular have become nagging social issues that continue to plague policy and decision makers (Baffour, 2006). The Bureau of Quality Assurance under the auspices of the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice was established in 1994 to monitor the quality of programs intended to rehabilitate juvenile offenders in Florida.

Since research has consistently demonstrated that poor performance in school is a major contributor to juvenile delinquency, it would not be unreasonable to believe that the educational experience a youth receives while incarcerated will factor significantly into how successful he is in returning to society and not committing additional crimes. Experts tend to agree that a strong education for youth while they are incarcerated is paramount to facilitating a successful return to society and school (Mincey, et. al, 2008). In 1998, The Juvenile Justice Educational Enhancement Program (JJEED) was born in an effort to apply the same quality monitoring for educational programs in the juvenile justice system so as to compliment what was already in place for the treatment

component. The current mission of JJEEP is to provide annual program evaluations as well as to conduct research on best practices in juvenile justice settings and disseminate those strategies (Blomberg & Waldo, 2001).

This study proposes to examine the potential relationships between evaluation scores received by juvenile justice educational programs and the propensity of juveniles to commit additional crimes upon release from incarceration. A high Quality Assurance score indicates that a program is meeting the established standards of good practice and it can then be surmised that the program is offering effective educational services to incarcerated juveniles. The purpose of this study is to attempt to synthesize the existing literature related to juvenile delinquency and juvenile justice education in order to form a framework for the examination of any influences a youth's educational experience while incarcerated might have on how well they transition back into their communities and not commit additional crimes. Numerous studies have shown that juveniles recidivate at rates as high as 50% within a year of their release from their residential commitment. Further research has shown that less than 10% of first time juvenile offenders, when they commit additional crimes, are responsible for more than half of all violent crimes (Jimerson, Sharkey, O'Brien & Furlong, 2004).

The research questions for this project were developed in order to examine any potential relationships or significance between how a program scores during its quality assurance review, and therefore the formal assessment of its quality, and the rate at which juveniles re-offend upon release from incarceration. The research questions are as follows:

1. What, if any, relationship exists between the mean Education Quality Assurance score a program receives during an annual review by JJEPP and the rates that juveniles successfully re-integrate back into society?
2. What, if any, relationship exists between the score a program receives in the Transition Standard and how successfully juveniles re-integrate into society?
3. Which of the four (4) Quality Assurance Educational Domains, if any, are the best predictors of the rates of successful re-integration for juveniles?
4. Which of the four (4) Quality Assurance Domains, if any, are the best predictors of the rates of successful re-integration for youth exiting residential programs?

Population and Sample

The information reported in this study was gathered from two sources. The quantitative secondary data was provided by DJJ's Bureau of Quality Assurance. The Educational QA scores from 177 program reviews were utilized in this study. The criteria by which programs were selected for inclusion in the study consisted of several items. First, it was important to ensure that the programs used in the information set were all reviewed under the same process and format. Next, the type of program and length of stay had to be considered. In Florida, a youth is committed to a program based on the severity of the newest offense and the number of previous crimes. When selecting programs to include in the statistical analysis, it was important to choose those programs with short enough length of stays to ensure that the majority of youth released would be returning to public school.

The programs selected for inclusion were Level 6 and Level 8 programs. Level 6 programs have an average length of stay between 7 to 12 months while level 8 programs have an average length of stay ranging from 12 to 18 months. Only programs receiving a full evaluation were included in the selection process. The length of stay in these programs offered two desirable qualities for inclusion in this study. First, the programs are long enough in duration that a youth has the opportunity to fully participate in the educational program and possibly make academic gains. Secondly, the length of commitment in these programs is not so long as to not afford a juvenile the opportunity to return to school upon their release.

Recidivism rates and Quality Assurance scores were gathered from three consecutive review years; 2003, 2004, and 2005. These years were selected because of two factors. First, the review format and results reporting were identical in all three review cycles. Secondly, 2006 is the last year that DJJ has complete recidivism information available regarding juveniles who were incarcerated and subsequently released.

Instrumentation Reliability and Validity

The information collected for this study was gathered through the annual review of juvenile justice education programs as conducted by the Juvenile Justice Education Enhancement Program (JJEPP). JJEPP reviews juvenile justice education programs by using a three tiered approach. The delivery of educational services is monitored by using a set of Quality Assurance Standards that focus on four domains, Transition, Service Delivery, Educational Resources and Contract Management. Within these standards are

key indicators that address specific requirements pertaining to the delivery of effective educational services for incarcerated juveniles. These standards are developed through research conducted by JJEEP staff and reflect the most current information regarding best practices for offering education programs to incarcerated juveniles. Reviewers utilize direct observation, record review, and interviews in order to assign a score on a particular key indicator.

These standards are reviewed annually by the Department of Education, providers of juvenile justice education programs, and local school district officials. The standards are reflective of legislation governing the education of incarcerated youth and JJEEP's ongoing mission to conduct research pertaining to best practice and to disseminate that information to the field (Blomberg & Waldo, 2001). The standards use number ratings to assign a score to a program's performance on a particular indicator, ultimately culminating in an overall QA score. Interviews with students and juvenile justice faculty are also an integral part of assigning a score for an indicator. Finally, student files and other required documentation are reviewed to determine the level of compliance with an indicator. When all of the information has been gathered, and scores assigned, a final report is generated that describes the level of the program's performance within the following categories: Exceptional Performance, Commendable Performance, Acceptable Performance, Minimal Performance and Failed to Meet Standards.

Data Collection

At the start of this study, permission was obtained from DJJ's Institutional Review Board to collect information on educational QA scores and juvenile recidivism. Permission was also granted by DJJ to interview a group of Juvenile Probation Officers (JPOs) in order to attempt to add some depth to the statistical information. The researcher gathered the QA scores and recidivism information and conducted the interviews. QA scores from 2003, 2004, and 2005 were gathered for this study. These years were selected because the QA scores were reported in the same format, and because the most recent data on juvenile recidivism corresponded to these report cycles.

QA scores from level 6 and level 8 programs only were used to build the sample. These levels of restrictiveness were used because of the somewhat similar program designs and the lengths of stay allow most juveniles upon their release to have the opportunity to return to school. A total of 177 QA scores over a three year period were included in the final statistics pool. This number represents the total number of complete program reviews during the 2003 – 2005 time period used for this study.

In addition to the quantitative data, interviews with JPOs were conducted to attempt to add further insight into the issues incarcerated youth face upon their release and efforts to return to school. Informal interviews with eight JPOs were conducted to examine issues like case load and the challenges they face in trying to help juveniles successfully return to their communities and school. Interviews were also conducted with a probation supervisor in the YouthBuild program. This program serves juveniles stepping down from more restrictive probation supervision while trying to complete their high school education along with learning the building trade. YouthBuild offers life and

work ready skills in addition to requiring its participants to enroll in an academic program as well.

Data Analysis

The first research question was examined by running a correlation analysis to determine the strength of the relationship between the education score programs earned and the success rate of students after their release from incarceration. The program's overall QA score is the mean of the scores it receives in each of the four standards it is evaluated against. Since transition is considered critical to a successful reentry experience, the relationship between transition planning and success rate was also examined (O'Rourke & Satterfield, 2005).

The second research question examines the strength of the relationship, if any, between the score a program earns in the transition standard and the success rates for juveniles returning to mainstream society. This was accomplished by utilizing a correlation analysis. This allowed for a closer examination of the potential influence of single standard on success rates, especially if a program only scored in the average range in the other standards. The importance of transition planning and re-entry services continues to be an area considered to be critical to a youth's chances for a successful return to society and subsequently school (Abrams, Shannon & Sangalang, 2008).

The third and fourth research questions were studied by using multiple linear regression. The third question seeks to explore the potential for any of the four education standards to be more influential in impacting successful re-entry rates for juveniles than another. Since all juvenile justice programs are reviewed by the Department of Juvenile

Justice, the fourth research question seeks to study if any of the of the QA standards' domains, including education, are better predictors of a youth's chances to be successful upon their release.

Research has demonstrated that one of the keys to preventing further involvement in the juvenile justice system is offering a youth the best possible combination of academic and counseling services (Mincey, et. al, 2008). This is an important element in studying the role of the programmatic and educational components in evaluating the overall quality of a facilities services and therefore how well a youth has been prepared for his ultimate release. This is especially important for juveniles returning to school after incarceration and who have learning disabilities (Garfinkel & Nelson, 2004).

The information was then entered into SPSS for data analysis. A correlation analysis was run to determine any possible relationships between QA scores and the rates at which juveniles re-offend after they are released from incarceration. When youth commit new crimes upon their release, the subsequent result is longer periods of costly incarceration and a growing sense of frustration among the general public (Christian, 2003).

The qualitative component of the study centered on interviews with Juvenile Probation Officers (JPO) and their experiences in assisting in returning juveniles to the school system upon their release from incarceration. The qualitative component of the research project was included to help add depth to the statistical information. It also helped corroborate what was learned through the review of literature. In order to conduct the interviews with the JPOs, permission was required by the Department of Juvenile Justice's (DJJ) Institutional Review Board (IRB). This process involved several written

contacts with the DJJ –IRB in order to review interview questions and to ensure the confidentiality of the participants. The interview questions were developed by the researcher and were approved by the University of Central Florida’s Institutional Review Board as well as DJJ’s.

Eight (8) Juvenile Probation Officers were interviewed and asked a series of seven questions relating to their experiences in transitioning youth from incarceration back into school. The transition component has been noted frequently as vital to offering a youth the optimal chance for success upon his return to society (Bullis, Havel & Yovanoff, 2004). The JPOs were interviewed in a private setting such as an office, and the entire interview lasted no longer than 15 minutes for each JPO. The purpose of these interviews was to attempt to add some depth to what the raw data was suggesting about program quality and rates of recidivism. The probation supervisor from YouthBuild was also interviewed in private utilizing the same survey questions.

All of the interview participants were willing volunteers. The interviews, of which the results are presented in the next chapter of this study, help in some ways to clarify what the data showed pertaining to the influence of a program’s quality and a youth’s success upon release from incarceration. The interviews also offered specific examples of the multiple factors that can influence a youth’s chances for success when he returns to his community. Youth being released from residential placement face numerous challenges in trying to return to the community and not having any additional involvement with law enforcement (Abrams, Sullivan & Sangalang, 2008).

Summary

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to gather data and explore potential relationships between QA scores and the frequency that juveniles commit new offenses upon their release from incarceration. The importance of transition planning and implementation has often been cited as critical to a youth's successful return to society, and ultimately, school. With three years of Quality Assurance scores across two levels of security restrictiveness, there is ample data to draw reasonable conclusions pertaining to the impact of program quality and its effect on curbing juvenile recidivism.

The results of the data analysis are discussed in the next chapter. A total of 177 QA scores covering a three (3) year period were placed in SPSS for analysis to examine potential relationships between the scores as a reflection of program quality and the success rates for juveniles re-entering society. Interviews with juvenile probation officers (JPOs) helped illustrate some of the questions raised by the results of the statistical analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR RESULTS

Each year, more than 2 million juveniles will be arrested for crimes varying in severity and the frequency of which they are committed. Furthermore, over 300,000 of these youth will spend time incarcerated in residential placements (Garfinkel & Nelson, 2004). On any given day in Florida, there are approximately 10,000 juveniles living in residential treatment programs, having been committed by the courts to these placements (Chester, et. al., 2002). It stands to reason that many schools will be receiving youth who are transitioning out of residential incarceration and back into the community. They may also be losing juveniles who will be beginning their residential commitments (Robb, 2006). The importance of a strong educational component in juvenile justice programs is critical to a youth's ability to successfully transition back into their communities and ultimately school.

In Florida, every juvenile justice program offering educational services is monitored by the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) and more specifically, the Juvenile Justice Education Enhancement Program (JJEED). Programs receive scores based on how well they are able to meet a set of four standards developed as best practices for serving incarcerated juveniles. These standards are: Transition Services, Service Delivery, Educational Resources, and Contract Management. Each of these standards have key indicators covering specific requirements for offering educational services for juveniles. These key indicators are rated on a scale of 0 (non-performance) to 9 (superior performance). The score a program receives in a particular standard is determined by how many points it earns out of the total number of possible points.

The Juvenile Justice Education Enhancement Program (JJEEP) has developed five (5) categories of performance that programs fall under based on their QA score. Programs scoring between 0% and 59% are identified as “Failing to Meet Standards.” Programs scoring between 60% and 69% are identified as “Minimal Performance.” Those scores ranging between 70% and 79% are deemed to have achieved “Acceptable Performance” while those scoring from 80% to 89% are considered to be at the “Commendable Performance” level. Programs earning a score above 90% are those identified as “Exceptional Performance.”

Evaluation scores from 177 program reviews over a period of three years were used to build the information base for this study. The scores were gathered from the Department of Juvenile Justice from the years 2003, 2004, and 2005. The scores were reported in the same format over this period, and this is also the period with the most complete information pertaining to juvenile recidivism. The scores were collected from programs with two different levels of restrictiveness and lengths of stay, but both with ample opportunity for youth to experience a program’s educational services and still needing to return to school upon their release. Research has shown that if youth do not receive adequate educational services while they are incarcerated, their chances of re-offending upon release are significantly higher (Portner, 1996). In Florida, it is the Education Quality Assurance (QA) Standards that drive program accountability and service delivery for incarcerated juveniles, including meeting legislative mandates (Pesta, et. al., 2002).

Quantitative Study

The quantitative component of this study was driven by four research questions. The questions sought to examine relationships between QA scores and the success rates for juveniles re-entering society after being released from incarceration. In the Florida Quality Assurance system, it is generally assumed that a program's QA score is reflective of the level and quality of the educational services it provides to incarcerated youth. The purpose of the quantitative component of the study was to examine if there was a relationship between QA scores in various categories and juvenile recidivism.

As previously mentioned, a total of 177 program review scores and corresponding recidivism data were gathered spanning a three year period. Only scores from level 6 and 8 programs were included in this study for analysis. The primary reason for this limiting factor is that these programs are long enough for youth to immerse in the educational program and yet are short enough to allow most juveniles the opportunity to return to society after completing their program. Of the 177 program QA scores included in this study, 75.7% of the programs were level 6 residential institutions (n = 134). The remaining 24.3 % of the scores were from level 8 educational programs (n = 43).

Table 1: DJJ Program Risk Levels

<u>Risk Level</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Valid Percent</u>
6	134	75.7	75.7
8	43	24.3	24.3
Total	177	100.0	100.3

The QA scores from three (3) of the education standards, transition, administration, and service delivery were utilized as independent variables, to conduct the statistical part of this study. The success rate for juveniles returning to society was the dependent variable. The contract management standard was not included in the statistical analysis because it is more a function of the local school system and its oversight of the delivery of educational services by the individual program. The delivery of educational services is monitored through the QA Review process.

Standards receive scores as percentages which then fall into a range of categories describing its level of performance. For example, scores falling below 60% (.60) are labeled as failing to meet standards. Scores between 60% (.60) and 69% (.69) are identified as minimally meeting standards. A standard receiving a score between 70% (.70) and 79% (.79) is considered to be acceptable performance. Scores falling between 80% (.80) and 89% (.89) are described as commendable performance and finally, scores above 90% (.90) are considered as exceptional performance. Interestingly, the transition standard, thought by many researchers to be a critical measure to a youth's successful transition back into society and school, had the lowest mean score ($m = .7092$). This is barely in the acceptable performance range.

Table 2: Distribution of QA Scores by Category

Failed to Meet Standards	Minimal Performance	Acceptable Performance	Commendable Performance	Exceptional Performance
15	33	70	50	9

The wide range in the success rates for juveniles returning to school and mainstream society indicates that there may be many variables associated with how well a youth does upon release from incarceration. The length of time a program has been in operation certainly may be a factor in how well it prepares a juvenile for his return to his community. Additionally its experience in providing educational services may factor into how well a youth is prepared academically to return to school.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Program Quality Assurance Scores

<u>Standard</u>	<u><i>n</i></u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Deviation</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Ed. Mean	177	.7469	.1186	.014
Transition	177	.7092	.1467	.022
Admin.	177	.7558	.1204	.014
Success	177	.5910	.1446	.021

Research Question 1

The first research question sought to explore any relationship between the education mean score the program receives and the rates that juveniles successfully return to society. On a scale of 0 – 9, with 0 being “non-performance” and 9 being “superior performance”, the mean composite education score is calculated by dividing the total points earned in each indicator within a standard and dividing it by the total possible points, thus earning a percent score that identifies the program’s level of performance.

The education mean score for all of the programs used in the study was .747 ($n = 177$). The mean rate of success for juveniles after completing their incarceration is 59% (.59). This means that 59% of juveniles being released from residential incarceration are not re-offending within the first year after their release. This in turn means that 41% of youth being released from incarceration commit new offenses within a year of their release. Interestingly, the analysis of the data using correlation analysis found little strength of relationship between the mean education QA score and success rates for juveniles ($r = .051$). The values are not statistically significant ($p = .498$) in terms of defining the relationship between the education mean score and the success rates for juveniles returning to society. When reviewing all of the programs in totality, 27% of the programs utilized in this study fell below the “Acceptable Performance” level for the mean Education score.

Table 4: Education Mean Score as a Predictor of Success

Factor	n	r	p
Ed. Mean	177	.051	.498

Research Question 2

The second research question explored the potential relationship between the score a program receives in the Education Transition Standard and the success rates for youth returning to mainstream society. A great deal of research has been devoted to this topic, and most experts in the field have agreed that it is a key component aiding a

youth’s successful re-entry (Mazzotti & Higgins, 2006). Using the same performance scale as before, with 0 being non performance and 9 being superior performance, each program was rated on the three (3) indicators within the transition education standard to earn an overall percent rating for the standard.

The mean score in the transition standard was 71% (.71), barely making the acceptable level of performance. Additionally, 44% of the scores for the Education Transition Standard fell below the “Acceptable Performance” level, meaning almost half of the programs do a poor job of preparing juveniles to return to public school. It is quite interesting to note then, that once again, the strength of the relationship between a score earned in educational transition planning and re-entry success rates is very weak ($r = -.023$). There is little statistical significance to explain any relationship between score and success ($p = .764$).

Table 5: Transition as a Predictor of Success

Factor	<i>n</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
Transition	177	-.023	.764

Research Question 3

The third research question seeks to examine any potential relationships between any of the educational QA standard scores as a best predictor for a youth’s success upon release from incarceration. The transition, service delivery, administration and contract management standards were the independent variables with success rate being the

dependent variable. Once more, in hoping that strong QA scores would correspond into juveniles being more successful in their return to society, the results are disappointing. In fact, transition, deemed critical by so much of the research has a negative correlation (B = -.161) (See Table 6). None of the standard scores demonstrated any statistical significance in their influence on reducing recidivism. Programs did fare better here overall than in the previous standards analyzed with only 19% of programs falling below the “Acceptable Performance” level in the Education Service Delivery Standards and 21% of the programs achieving below the “Acceptable Performance” level in the Education Administration Standard.

Table 6: All Education Domains and Juvenile Success Rates

Domain	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	SE	Beta	t	p
Transition	-.161	.110	-.163	-1.467	.144
Service	.091	.139	.081	.651	.516
Administration	.043	.149	.038	.291	.772
Contract Mgmt.	.079	.063	.117	1.243	.215

Research Question 4

When a program serving juvenile delinquents is evaluated, it receives an overall Quality Assurance score that includes education as one component. The fourth research question sought to examine any potential relationships between all of the main standards

by which a program is evaluated by the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Juvenile Justice Educational Enhancement Program. Similar to Research Question 3, the data shows no significant relationship between a QA score in any domain and the affect of juvenile success rates after they are released from incarceration. It should be noted that of the four areas analyzed, the administrative mean, the core services mean, the program Safety mean, and the Education mean, it was the Education domain that had the best relationship, albeit weak, to youth success rates ($p = .251$).

Table 7: All QA Scores and Juvenile Success Rates

Domain	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		<i>p</i>
	B	SE	Beta	<i>t</i>	
Ed. Mean	.122	.106	-.100	1.151	.251
Prog. Admin.	-.144	.133	-.120	-1.086	.279
Core Mean	-.056	.175	-.040	-.319	.750
Safety	.042	.143	.031	.294	.769

Qualitative Study

Because the quantitative data analysis showed such surprisingly weak relationships between program performance and the affect on the rates at which juveniles re-offend after they are released from incarceration, a qualitative aspect was added to the study. Juvenile Probation Officers (JPOs) are the primary drivers in returning youth back

to school after they are released from residential care. The JPOs from 2 probation units were interviewed to gather their insight into the nuances and issues relating to transitioning a youth from incarceration back into society and ultimately school.

In addition to the DJJ Juvenile Probation Officers, a probation supervisor from the YouthBuild program was interviewed to bring further depth to the qualitative component. YouthBuild is a program stepping juveniles down to less restrictive supervision (probation) and returning a youth to school while providing him with skill development and work opportunities. YouthBuild serves juveniles up through the age of 19 and they must qualify for the program through interviews and must score high enough on the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) to be accepted into the program.

While interviewing Juvenile Probation Officers, a number of interesting trends emerged pertaining to both the issues students have faced in school prior to arrest, and in terms of their actual experiences in the system. It has many times become clear that youth are engaged in a system that often perpetuates their frustration and tendency to re-offend through large case loads and uneven quality in programs returning juveniles to mainstream society. The information that follows summarizes interviews with probation staff that play the most critical role in supervising a youth's return to school and society in general.

The JPOs that were interviewed were asked a series of seven (7) questions designed to gather information that strived to capture an overview of a juvenile's return from incarceration and what those supervising these youth saw as the most influential factors on their success. The questions also touched on a JPO's new monthly cases and the JPO's familiarity with the Quality Assurance score for the education component of

the program releasing the youth. One of the strongest common themes that emerged was that the vast majority of juveniles leaving residential placement have had significantly negative school experiences prior to entering the delinquent system contributing to their tendency to come into trouble with law enforcement (Mincey, et. al, 2008).

The JPOs also discussed some the insights that they have garnered from the juveniles they have worked with over the years, which will also be incorporated into this discussion. Juvenile are surprisingly in touch with not only their own issues, but the strengths and weaknesses as they perceive them within the system that is supposed to be helping them turn their lives around. The questions for the JPO interviews were as follows:

1. How many juveniles do you transition from residential care each month?
 - a. 1-10
 - b. 11-15
 - c. 16-20
 - d. 20+
2. Are you familiar with the sending program's education Quality Assurance (QA) score?
3. What are some of the issues and challenges you encounter in trying to return a juvenile to the school system?
 - a. Incomplete or missing educational records from the program.
 - b. Resistance from the school administrator(s).
 - c. Poor family support system for the youth.
 - d. Other; please explain.
4. What do you typically find the youth's attitude towards his education to be after his incarceration is complete?
 - a. Positive and eager to return to school.
 - b. Anxious about their return to school despite a good program experience.
 - c. Anxious but desiring to return to school despite a less than satisfying program experience.
 - d. Negative because of a poor program experience.
 - e. Negative and/or no interest in continuing his/her education.

5. What have you found to be the key components for a youth’s successful return to school after incarceration?
6. What factors most frequently contribute to a youth’s unsuccessful return to school?
7. Additional comments and observations.

None of the JPOs received, on average, more than four (4) new cases a month. In most instances, the number of new juveniles received by a JPO was in the range of 2 to 3 new cases each month. YouthBuild is slightly different in that it builds its class of students at the beginning of an academic term and generally does not admit new youth until the new academic term begins.

Table 8: New Juveniles Transitioning from Residential Care

Juveniles	<i>n</i>	Mean
1-10	8	3
11-15	0	0
16-20	1	NA
20+	0	0

When asked about their familiarity with the sending program’s educational QA score, not one JPO was familiar with how well the program performed. In fact, the vast majority of the JPOs were not familiar with any of the programs’ QA scores. This is somewhat surprising given the increased attention and focus being placed on accountability for juvenile justice education programs (Hamilton, et. al, 2007).

In speaking with JPOs about the issues they faced trying to get juveniles leaving incarceration returned to school, again a number of common issues emerged. The single issue cited by every JPO was that the youth have poor family support systems. Even getting the juvenile's parents to participate in transition planning was often times difficult. Bullis, Havel, and Yovanoff (2004) address the significance of transition planning that includes a significant family involvement component. Other JPOs discussed how students had such poor educational experiences before entering into incarceration that their return to public school resulted in high levels of anxiety for the youth. A strong educational experience, and the failure for youth to often times have that, results in frustration and the tendency to turn to other, less socially acceptable outlets for their anxiety such as truancy and delinquency (Wheldall & Watkins, 2004).

The other frequently identified issue among JPOs was the resistance they experienced from school administrators in trying to return juveniles back to school ($n=6$). Many of the JPOS noted that school official often had pre-conceived notions about a juvenile based either on previous experience or simply the fact that he was returning after being incarcerated. Several JPOs also noted that incomplete educational records were forwarded by the program ($n=3$). Transferring complete educational records are critical to building and facilitating strong support for the youth after his return to school (Hellriegel & Yates, 1999).

Table 9: Issues Faced by JPOs Returning Youth to School after Incarceration

<u>Issue</u>	<u><i>n</i></u>
Incomplete or missing records	3
Resistance from School Administrators	6
Poor Family Support	8
Other (Student Behavior)	1

The next research question offered a great deal of insight into what juveniles experienced while in public schools, how they felt about returning to school, some of their assessments of what the system did (or did not do) for them. The JPOs expressed during their interviews that the vast majority of students they work with want to return to school and be successful. The youth also express to their JPOs feelings of being anxious about returning to school. The JPOs were able to articulate many of their conversations with the youth they supervise and share those conversations during their interviews.

Many youth expressed being bored in school, and that they did not fit in. Many were sent to an alternative placement that resulted often times in further frustration with the educational system. JPOs shared that most juveniles considered their alternative educational placement a negative experience that contributed even greater dissatisfaction and frustration with school. A number of youth have found that their family issues also contribute to their lack of success in school since there is no real support mechanism to assist them when they start to slip backwards.

JPOs related that a youth’s anxiousness about returning to school had little to do with their program experience, unless that experience was completely unsuccessful. Again, a juvenile’s anxiety about returning to school, especially if it was their original school, was rooted in being accepted by their peers and school officials. All of the JPOs ($n=8$) expressed that the youth they work with are typically anxious about returning to school and being able to complete high school.

Table 10: Youth’s Attitude about Their Education after Incarceration

<u>Issue</u>	<u><i>n</i></u>
Positive & Eager to Return to School	0
Anxious to Return After a Good Program Experience	6
Anxious to return After a Poor Program Experience	2
No Interest in Continuing Education	1

There were two other critical educational issues that were revealed during interviews with the Juvenile Probation Officers. All of the JPOs expressed that almost every juvenile they work with, even before incarceration, have poor reading, writing and math skills. Research tells us that as many as 34% of juvenile delinquents in incarceration have reading levels at the first grade (Vacca, 2008). Poor reading skills typically stymie a youth’s other opportunities for success in school because they lack the fundamental skills to participate in class or complete homework and class assignments.

JPOs were asked about the key factors that contribute to a juvenile's ability to be successful in returning to school and his community. The common theme was the importance of providing a support system for the youth. Transition planning has been identified in numerous studies as being vital to a juvenile's chances for a successful reintegration back into school and society (O'Rourke & Satterfield, 2005). Each of the JPOs who were interviewed identified the necessity of having a plan for juvenile leaving incarceration in place before they are released. The JPOs also identified the importance of putting together the right services and agencies that can collaborate to support a juvenile after he is released. Support based on collaboration among school, family, the JPO and involved agencies can greatly increase the chances for success (Quinn & Nelson, 2005).

Also noted as key to a juvenile's chances for success were follow-up, having a plan that includes either school or a job, goal setting, and support from all involved on behalf of the juvenile. Along with that, the JPOs also consistently stated that the youth must be held accountable, starting with attending school and staying there. They also noted that despite the best articulated and executed plans, household and family issues often serve as a challenge to the youth being completely successful. This concept led to the last interview question about the factors that contribute most frequently to a juvenile not being successful after incarceration and leading to issues in school or re-arrest.

When asked about what erodes a youth's opportunity to be successful when returning to school and the community, the answers were consistent and worrisome. Several JPOs noted that bad attitudes upfront by school administrators can quickly derail a juvenile trying to return to school and get his academic career back on track. The lack

of family support was also noted by each JPO interviewed, noting that often the youth has nowhere to turn for the support they need before exploring alternatives such as truancy or delinquency. Additionally, along with poor family support mechanisms and dysfunctional family environments, juveniles frequently return to the same peer groups where they originally started experiencing issues in school and with law enforcement.

Interestingly, several JPOs noted that too much time at a transition or alternative school can harm a youth's attempts to come back to school. The JPOs also noted a lack of vision in many youth and reluctance to follow the rules of their probation as causes for further delinquency. The need for most juveniles to be involved in some form of counseling such as substance abuse or anger management counseling was also identified by the majority of the JPOs interviewed.

When it comes to their education, JPOs cited the importance of smaller classes for juveniles returning from incarceration as a key for success. Being able to have more attention in class allows juveniles to better grasp lessons and reduce their frustration in not comprehending what is transpiring in the classroom. During the interviews, many of the JPOs shared that the youth they work with often express concerns about inconsistent content delivery and enforcement of school policy as part of their frustration with the educational system. Many juveniles opt to not return to more traditional educational settings and explore other options such as completing their high school diploma through a GED program.

CHAPTER FIVE DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion of Findings

The primary goal of this study was an attempt to examine the issues that on the surface may not appear to be all that closely related. On the one hand, the issue of juvenile delinquency is at the forefront, and perhaps just as important, the issue of juvenile recidivism. The growing concern by the public and by legislatures across the United States has led to numerous debates as to how best allocate financial resources in dealing with juvenile delinquency (Nagin, et. al., 2006). On the other hand, there is the need to educate incarcerated juveniles in such a manner that they experience successful learning gains that position them for a successful return to society and school. There is also the related issue of program quality and its impact on recidivism as juveniles exit incarceration.

There are numerous warning signs that have been identified as predictive of potential involvement with law enforcement while juveniles are still in school. For example, juveniles who struggle in school both academically and socially have been identified as at far greater risk for delinquency than their more successful peers (Casey, 1996). Youth who drop out of school prior to graduation have a far greater propensity for being arrested than those who elect to remain in school (Archwamety & Katsiyannis, 2000). With a demonstrated lack of parental involvement and intervention, youth are becoming even more at risk for delinquent behavior, especially when their academic performance begins to decline (Walter & Sprague, 1999).

With the public schools demonstrating a serious lack of ability to help those students most in need, it is all the more important to ensure that those youth who are intimately involved in the juvenile justice system receive the best and most appropriate educational services possible while they are incarcerated. Indeed, incarcerated juveniles are the beneficiaries of numerous protections of law and their rights are clearly defined in statute (Keeley, 2004). The seemingly never ending conflict between punishment and rehabilitation constantly places the (legal) educational rights of incarcerated juveniles at odds with a system and society demanding accountability (Mazzotti & Higgins, 2006).

Compounding the general public's relatively negative view of treating juvenile delinquents is the nagging question of juvenile recidivism. As the analysis of information gathered for this study clearly demonstrates, the tendency of juveniles to commit additional crimes after incarceration is not prescribed by a pre-determined set of factors (Baltodano, Mathur & Rutherford, 2005). It appears, rather, that the issues challenging youth being released from incarceration are complex and multi-faceted, with a successful educational experience playing perhaps a significant, yet not clearly defined role. And, as the statistics have shown, a juvenile's chances for success appear to have little to do with the quality of the educational program returning him to public school. Youth in the juvenile justice system often have complicated long term issues that require multi-level strategies to maximize a youth's ability to successfully return to society (O'Rourke & Satterfield, 2005).

Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, the quantitative numbers gathered for this study offered little insight into the relationships between the quality of juvenile justice educational programs and the rates at which juveniles successfully exit incarceration.

Florida has one of the most advanced systems of monitoring juvenile justice education programs that evoke a core mission of improving the delivery of educational programming for youth committed to residential placement. With each passing year, and a continued increase in juvenile recidivism, there has been a continued call for educational program accountability (Chester, et. al., 2002). One of the questions to be discussed at various points in the debate over the “treatment” of incarcerated juveniles is not only what services to offer, but how to assess the quality of those services. In 1998 the Juvenile Justice Education Enhancement Program (JJEED) was created to oversee the quality of educational services for juveniles committed to the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). JJEED’s ongoing mission is to conduct research on best practices in juvenile justice settings as well as to provide annual oversight and analysis of program quality (Blomberg & Waldo, 2001).

The quantitative analysis showed no better than very weak relationships between the Quality Assurance (QA) score programs received and the success rates for juvenile exiting their residential placements. Knowing that there are a number of other mitigating factors that can influence a youth returning to his community, this revelation in and of itself may not have been all that earth shattering. However, perhaps the most significant revelation of the analysis was the significant lack of statistical relationship between transition planning and successful re-entry back into society. Much of the major research emphasizes the importance of transition planning in preparing for a youth’s eventual return to his community. In fact, mindful that recidivism rates run as high as 50% or even more, the need for developing plans, especially educational transition plans, for support

services is critical for optimizing a juvenile's chances for a successful re-integration experience (Bullis, Havel & Yovanoff, 2004).

The surprisingly weak, albeit nonexistent, relationship between transition planning and successful re-entry rates for juveniles ($r = .023$) raises questions as to what other factors come into play when a youth leaves residential incarceration and returns to his community. And yet, the bounty of available literature enraptures the reader with the profound importance of effective transition planning if juveniles are to ever have any hope of successfully returning to their communities. Much of the research indicates that if a youth can receive the types and levels of support he is offered while incarcerated, his chances of re-offending upon his release from commitment are significantly reduced (Stenhjem, 2005). Clearly, effective transition planning for youth exiting incarceration makes great sense. But the underlying question of what can torpedo the best laid transition plans demands further exploration.

The juvenile delinquent female population adds additional factors into the influences on successful re-entry rates for incarcerated youth. As mentioned previously, females represent the fastest growing segment of the delinquent youth population. This revelation demonstrates the gender specific issues and needs of incarcerated females, including their educational program design (Hubbard & Pratt, 2002). Female juvenile delinquents represent the fastest growing segment of the entire delinquency population. One of the struggles of the juvenile justice system as a whole has been to develop effective programming that is specifically designed to deal with the intricate issues of female delinquents (Bloom, et. al., 2002). Programming specific to the needs of adolescent female delinquents, especially the incorporation of pre-social gender specific

role models has been found vital to their successful return to society (Holsinger & Ayers, 2004).

The qualitative component of the study offers a bit deeper insight into the challenges and issues facing juveniles wishing to return to public school and the community upon their release from incarceration. The interviews with juvenile probation officers (JPOs) clearly demonstrated a number of compounding issues when attempting to transition youth back to school. The factors awaiting youth trying to transition back to the traditional school setting have in reality, very little to do with the quality of the education they received while incarcerated. Poor family support, lack of vision by the juvenile, resistance by school officials, and the ever presence of peers are just some of the roadblocks facing youth attempting to leave incarceration and return to mainstream society.

Implications and Recommendations for Further Research

The quantitative and qualitative revelations of this study do offer potential implications for further research. In light of the related issues and documented research, actually, a great deal. Knowing what is now know about the influencing factors beyond the educational component for incarcerated youth, the opportunities to expand upon the foundation laid by this study are seemingly endless.

It would certainly seem appropriate to recommend that this study be expanded to study any possible relationship between the academic gains a juvenile makes while incarcerated and the tendency to commit new offenses after being released, especially considering the statistical analysis between the Education QA score and juvenile

recidivism showed almost no correlation. Keeley (2006) speaks to the importance of incarcerated juveniles being able to achieve clear and tangible academic gains during the time of their confinement. It would seem, therefore, that a deeper investigation of the impact of a youth's achieving academic success while incarcerated would warrant consideration for further study. Perhaps examining any potential correlation between the academic gains students manifest in a program and its QA score may also prove valuable, possibly telling state officials if they are looking at the right things to fight juvenile recidivism. A study could be designed to examine potential relationships between the academic gains students achieve while they are incarcerated and how successfully they return to society and school.

The whole issue of female delinquents is a vastly understudied and largely under explored area of study, especially in terms of the impact of the educational services (as well as programmatic) they receive while incarcerated. Females are the fastest growing segment of the delinquent population, including minority female adolescents. This speaks clearly to the need to focus on the specific needs of incarcerated females, including their educational program (Hubbard & Pratt, 2002). Female adolescents are in desperate need of positive role models and the inclusion of this concept in an education program serving females could beckon for further investigation (Holsinger & Ayers, 2004).

Examining Education QA scores from female programs as opposed to male programs could offer insight into any relationship between QA scores and the rates at which females re-offend upon release from residential commitment. It would also be appropriate to include analysis of academic gains made by incarcerated female

adolescents and how successfully they return to society. This would also speak to the type of program design used to work with female adolescents as opposed to males.

There may also be benefit to more closely examining the differences between level 6 and level 8 programs. Length of stay and the level of security may have some impact on the delivery of educational services for incarcerated youth as well as how successful they are when they eventually return to mainstream society. Both of these program levels offer youth a length of stay that typically allows them to ultimately return to school and ultimately apply the skills they acquired while incarcerated. Level 6 programs typically incarcerate youth for approximately 7 to 12 months while level 8 programs detain youth for 12 to 18 months. A future study may wish to examine the potential impact of the different lengths of stay and the additional exposure to the educational program level 8 students may possibly gain from over their level 6 peers, specifically studying academic gains in terms of credit recovery of diplomas.

For those juveniles who are successful in returning to school and society, there are other avenues that may well be explored. Since transition planning and career exploration have been cited so often as being critical to a youth's successful return to society, it may prove insightful to study how many juveniles eventually transition to post secondary or career and vocational education. Examining choices to enter the workforce and whether students return for further education may too prove enlightening.

It is hoped that this study will inspire others to examine this important issue of providing education to incarcerated juveniles and perhaps open more eyes and ears to the importance of this issue. Juveniles, all of them, are the future. For better or worse, how youth fare when challenged will define their future and the greater impact on society.

Illiteracy is the documented scourge of the incarcerated population. Discovering a way to assist troubled youth find a different path will benefit both the juvenile and the greater of society. Helping to develop better educated juveniles while they are incarcerated will hopefully lead to fewer juvenile delinquents, or at the very least, the improved opportunity to help them find a better way for themselves.

APENDIX A
IRB LETTER



University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board
Office of Research & Commercialization
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246
Telephone: 407-823-2901, 407-882-2901 or 407-882-2276
www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html

Notice of Expedited Initial Review and Approval

From : UCF Institutional Review Board
FWA00000351, Exp. 5/07/10, IRB00001138

To : Kevin Egan

Date : April 09, 2008

IRB Number: SBE-08-05611

Study Title: Evaluation of Juvenile Justice Education Programs: What the Numbers Say about Juvenile Recidivism

Dear Researcher:

Your research protocol noted above was approved by expedited review by the UCF IRB Chair on 4/9/2008. The expiration date is 4/8/2009. Your study was determined to be minimal risk for human subjects and expeditable per federal regulations, 45 CFR 46.110. The category for which this study qualifies as expeditable research is as follows:

7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

The IRB has approved a consent procedure which requires participants to sign consent forms. Use of the approved, stamped consent document(s) is required. Only approved investigators (or other approved key study personnel) may solicit consent for research participation. Subjects or their representatives must receive a copy of the consent form(s).

All data, which may include signed consent form documents, must be retained in a locked file cabinet for a minimum of three years (six if HIPAA applies) past the completion of this research. Any links to the identification of participants should be maintained on a password-protected computer if electronic information is used. Additional requirements may be imposed by your funding agency, your department, or other entities. Access to data is limited to authorized individuals listed as key study personnel.

To continue this research beyond the expiration date, a Continuing Review Form must be submitted 2 – 4 weeks prior to the expiration date. Advise the IRB if you receive a subpoena for the release of this information, or if a breach of confidentiality occurs. Also report any unanticipated problems or serious adverse events (within 5 working days). Do not make changes to the protocol methodology or consent form before obtaining IRB approval. Changes can be submitted for IRB review using the Addendum/Modification Request Form. An Addendum/Modification Request Form **cannot** be used to extend the approval period of a study. All forms may be completed and submitted online at <http://iris.research.ucf.edu>.

Failure to provide a continuing review report could lead to study suspension, a loss of funding and/or publication possibilities, or reporting of noncompliance to sponsors or funding agencies. The IRB maintains the authority under 45 CFR 46.110(e) to observe or have a third party observe the consent process and the research.

On behalf of Tracy Dietz, Ph.D., UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Joanne Muratori on 04/09/2008 12:58:00 PM EDT

IRB Coordinator

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Juvenile Probation Officer Interview Questions

1. How many juveniles do you transition from residential care each month?
 - a. 1-10
 - b. 11-15
 - c. 16-20
 - d. 20+
2. Are you familiar with the sending program's educational Quality Assurance (QA) score?
3. What are some of the issues & challenges you encounter in trying to return a juvenile to the school system?
 - a. Incomplete or missing educational records from the program
 - b. Resistance from the school administrator(s)
 - c. Poor family support system for the youth
 - d. Other; Please explain
4. What do you typically find the youth's attitude towards his education to be after his incarceration is complete?
 - a. Positive and eager to return to school
 - b. Anxious about their return to school despite a good program experience
 - c. Anxious but desiring to return to school despite a less than satisfying program experience
 - d. Negative because of a poor program experience
 - e. Negative and/or no interest in continuing with his/her education
5. What have you found to be the key components for a youth's successful return to school after incarceration?
6. What factors most frequently contribute to a youth's unsuccessful return to school?
7. Additional comments and observations.

APPENDIX C
EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS

Educational Quality Assurance Standards Residential

Juvenile Justice Commitment Programs 2008 - 2009

Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services· Division of K-12 Public Schools
Florida Department of Education

QA Rating Guidelines

The educational QA process evaluates the quality of educational services provided to students since the last QA review or for the entire year, depending on the review schedule. External factors affecting educational quality may be identified in the QA report. Educational personnel should retain documentation to verify situations or circumstances beyond the control of the educational provider and the school district.

Preliminary QA ratings presented on the last day of the on-site review are subject to final determination upon review by additional Juvenile Justice Educational Enhancement Program (HEEP) staff and Department of Education (DOE) personnel. To ensure consistency among reviewers, at least two other HEEP reviewers and the QA review director reviews each QA report.

Prior to assessing the overall quality of an indicator, reviewers determine whether minimum requirements are met in each benchmark. Failure to meet minimum requirements for a single *critical* benchmark (identified by boldfaced type) results in a *Partial* or *Nonperformance* (3-0) rating.

These 11 benchmarks have been identified as critical to satisfactory performance:

- 1.1 Enrollment
- 2.1 Entry academic assessment
- 3.1 Individual academic plans (IAPs)
- 3.3 Individual educational plans (IEPs)
- 5.2 Substantial academic curriculum
- 6.1 Explicit reading instruction
- 8.2 Exceptional student education (ESE) process
- 9.1 Adequate instructional time
- 10.1 Teacher certification
- 13.2 Data management
- 13.6 Contract management oversight

Additionally, an indicator may receive a *Partial* rating (even if all critical benchmarks are met) if the overall quality of the indicator is not satisfactory. Failure to meet minimum requirements for a single *noncritical* benchmark results in an indicator rating of no higher than a *Satisfactory 5*.

Superior Performance - Rating of 7, 8, or 9

The expected outcome of the indicator is clearly being met; the program exceeds the overall requirements of the indicator through an innovative approach, extended services, or demonstrated program-wide dedication to the overall performance of the indicator.

Satisfactory Performance - Rating of 4, 5, or 6

The expected outcome of the indicator is clearly being met; some minor exceptions or inconsistencies in meeting specific benchmarks may be evident.

Partial Performance - Rating of 1, 2, or 3

The expected outcome of the indicator is not being met, and frequent exceptions and inconsistencies in meeting specific benchmarks are evident.

Nonperformance - Rating of 0

The expected outcome of the indicator is clearly not being addressed.

If a school district contract manager or educational provider feels the educational QA review was conducted unfairly, he/she may submit a letter to the HEEP QA Review Director stating specific concerns. JJEPP and DOE staff, as necessary, will address these concerns, and the QA review director will notify the school district contract manager and the educational provider of the outcome.

Educational Standard One: Transition

The transition standard is composed of four indicators that address entry, on-site, and exit transition activities. Transition activities ensure that students are placed in appropriate educational programs that prepare them for successful re-entry into community, school, and/or work settings.

Indicator 1: On-Site Transition Services

The expected outcome of this indicator is that the program assists students with re-entry into community, school, and/or work settings through guidance and transition services.

Indicator 2: Testing and Assessment

The expected outcome of this indicator is that entry assessments are used to diagnose students' academic and career/technical strengths, weaknesses, and interests to address the individual needs of the students and that exit assessments and state assessments are used to evaluate the performance of students in juvenile justice schools.

Indicator 3: Student Planning

The expected outcome of this indicator is that academic and transition planning is designed and implemented to assist students in maximizing academic achievement and experiencing successful transition back to school and the community.

Indicator 4: Community Reintegration

The expected outcome of this indicator is that transition planning activities are designed and implemented to facilitate students' transition from a Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) program to the community, which may include school, peer groups, employment, and family reintegration.

Indicator 1: On-Site Transition Services

Intent

The expected outcome of this indicator is that the juvenile justice school assists students with re-entry into community, school, and/or work settings through guidance and transition services.

Process Guidelines-The following benchmarks represent the major elements of the indicator used to gather evidence to determine whether the indicator's intent is being met.

The program has transition activities that include:

- 1.1 Enrolling students in appropriate courses in the management information system (MIS) upon entry based on past records, entry assessment scores, and Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) results (Courses must be grade-appropriate and include English/language arts, reading, math, social studies, and science as needed for student progression or high school graduation)
- 1.2 Advising all students with regard to their abilities and aptitudes, educational and occupational opportunities, personal and social adjustments, diploma options, "major" areas of interest, post-secondary opportunities, and educational status and progress
- 1.3 Documenting that an educational representative who is familiar with the students' performance participates in exit staffings or transition meetings and assists students with successful transition to their next educational or career/technical placements
- 1.4 Documenting transmittal of students' educational exit packets to the transition contacts in their receiving school districts prior to their exit (Exit packets shall include, at a minimum, a cumulative transcript reporting credits earned prior to and during commitment, school district withdrawal forms with grades in progress, current individual educational plans [IEPs] and/or individual academic plans [IAPs], exit plans, and career education certificates and diplomas earned at the program.)

Benchmark 1.2 and the reading enrollment requirement are not applicable to programs that only serve students fewer than 40 calendar days. For programs serving students for fewer than 40 calendar days, the educational component may be limited to tutorial activities and career employability skills.

QA Review Methods

- Review all self-report information
- Review current educational files, closed files, educational exit packets, records requests, MIS enrollment, course schedules, prior records, documented transmittal of records (e.g., fax or mail receipts), progress monitoring plans, IAPs, transition plans, and other appropriate documentation
- Interview transition specialist, registrar, guidance counselors, treatment team members, other appropriate personnel, and students.

Clarification

Educational staff should access students' educational records in their commitment packets prior to requesting records from their previous placements. Documented records requests (by fax or electronic access) must be made within five school days of student entry, and follow-up requests should be made as needed. (Fax transmittal receipts should be retained.) Electronic educational records maintained on site are acceptable.

Out-of-county students' records should be requested through multiple sources, such as the Florida Automated System for Transferring Educational Records (FASTER), juvenile probation officers; detention centers, previous school districts, and/or students' legal guardians. Records requested should include current transcripts, academic plans, withdrawal forms, progress monitoring plans, entry/exit assessments, school district course schedules, Section 504 plans, and exceptional student education (ESE) records.

Programs must provide courses for credit and/or student progression leading toward high school graduation throughout the 250-day school year, including summer school. Middle school students must be enrolled in language arts, math, science, and social studies.

All middle and high school students who scored Level 1 in reading on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) must be enrolled in intensive reading courses until they score at least a Level 2 or have completed a credit in intensive reading during the current school year. *Disfluent* Level 2 middle and high school students must be served in an intensive reading course taught by a teacher who has reading certification or endorsement; *fluent* Level 2 students may be served in a content area course taught by a teacher who has reading certification or endorsement or has completed the Florida Online Reading Professional Development (FOR-PD) or other version of the school district-approved Reading Endorsement Competency 2 and the Content Area Reading Professional Development (CAR-PD) Academy. Students who score Level 3 or higher should not be enrolled in an intensive reading course unless the school district comprehensive reading plan indicates otherwise. If FCAT scores are unavailable, students' enrollment in reading should be determined by following the criteria in the school district comprehensive reading plan or the Just Read, Florida! Student Reading Placement chart at <http://www.justreadflorida.org/educators.asp>. All students in grades 11 and 12 who have not passed the FCAT reading test must be enrolled in an intensive reading course.

Intensive math, intensive English, and reading courses are for elective credit only. Only those students who are eligible to graduate but have not passed the FCAT may take these courses instead of science and social studies. Graduation requirements now include four credits in math and selection of a major area of interest beginning with 9th grade students enrolled in 2007.

All students should have easy and frequent access to comprehensive guidance/advising services. Students should be able to articulate their credits earned, grade levels, and diploma options. Students interested in obtaining a General Educational Development (GED) diploma should receive counseling regarding the benefits and limitations of this option.

Educational representatives should document their participation in exit transition meetings in person or via written input. Transition contacts in students' receiving school districts determine students' next educational placements based on the school district's transition protocol. The program should forward students' educational records to the transition contacts, the parents, and the re-entry counselors (as appropriate). For school district transition contacts information, access <http://www.criminologycenter.fsu.edu/jjeplcontacts-transition.php>.

Documentation of transmittal of all the required information might include management information system (MIS) transmittal, certified mail receipts, fax transmittal verifications, and/or signatures of receipt. Academic history screens, handwritten credits, or verbal assurances of grade promotions are not acceptable. Students' withdrawal grades should be averaged into their current semester grades from the program and one-half credit should be awarded as appropriate (see Florida Statute 1003.436). Cumulative transcripts must be requested after students' exit meetings 14 days prior to their exit and transmitted to the transition contacts.

Performance Rating

D Superior Performance	7	8	9
D Satisfactory Performance	4	5	6
D Partial Performance	1	2	3
D Nonperformance			0

Indicator 2: Testing and Assessment

Intent

The expected outcome of this indicator is that entry assessments are used to diagnose students' academic, career, and technical strengths, weaknesses, and interests to address students' individual needs and that exit assessments are used to evaluate the performance of students in juvenile justice schools.

Process Guidelines-The following benchmarks represent the major elements of the indicator used to gather evidence to determine whether the indicator's intent is being met.

The program's testing and assessment practices include administering:

- 2.1 The Basic Achievement Skills Inventory (BASI) for reading, language arts, and mathematics within 10 school days of student entry into the facility
- 2.2 Career and technical aptitude assessments and/or career interest surveys that are used to enhance employability and career/technical instruction within 10 school days of student entry into the facility
- 2.3 The BASI for reading, language arts, and mathematics to all exiting students who have been in the program for 45 or more school days and documenting the transmittal of entry and exit BASI growth scale value to the school district for management information system [MIS] reporting or reporting the scores directly into the MIS

Programs that serve students fewer than 45 school days are not required to administer the BASI but should administer an appropriate entry assessment for reading, writing/language arts, and math for instructional planning.

Benchmarks 2.2 and 2.3 are not applicable to programs that only serve students fewer than 40 calendar days.

QA Review Methods

- Review student educational files, assessments, MIS records, and other appropriate documentation
- Interview personnel responsible for testing procedures, other appropriate personnel, and students
- Verify that the assessments used are appropriate for the areas to be assessed and for the ages and grade levels of the students

Clarification

Programs should administer the designated common assessment according to the administrative guidelines to students who enter the facility after July 1, 2006. The BASI assessment should only be administered at entry, at exit, and at students' one-year anniversary date of enrollment as appropriate. Programs may use prior results from the same assessment if they are recent (according to the assessment's administrative guidelines) and if the program's instructional personnel determine that the scores are accurate. Assessments shall be appropriate for the student's age, grade, language proficiency, and program length of stay and shall be nondiscriminatory with respect to culture, disability, and socioeconomic status. All academic assessments must be administered according to the test publisher's guidelines and in an appropriate testing environment by a trained administrator.

To diagnose students' needs and accurately measure students' progress, academic and career assessments should be aligned with the program's curriculum. Instructional personnel should have access to assessment results regarding students' needs, abilities, and career interests and aptitudes. Career assessment results should be used to determine student placement in career and technical programming, when appropriate, and to guide students in career decision making.

Career assessments administered should be based on students' current career awareness and address students' varying ability levels. Students under the age of 12 are not required to complete a career assessment. Students who have earned a high school or a General Educational Development (GED) diploma should be administered a career assessment.

The same academic assessments administered at entry should be used to assess all students exiting the program except for students who earn a diploma while at the program. Exit assessments are required for all students who spend 45 or more school days in the program. Students in long-term (more than one year) commitment programs should be administered an exit test using the common assessment on an annual basis as long as he/she has 45 or more school days remaining at the program. If a student has fewer than 45 school days remaining, the program should only administer an exit test to the student.

If a student re-offends within 30 days of exit from the program, the youth's exit assessment should be used as the entry assessment in the next placement. Students who transfer to another Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) program after spending at least 45 school days in the program should be administered an exit assessment; in this case, the exit assessment results may be used as the entry assessment scores at the new program and should be entered into the MIS at the new program. Existing entry assessment scores for students transferred within 45 school days may be used at the new program. Unanticipated transfers should be documented to indicate that exit testing was not possible.

Programs should use the growth scale value for management information system (MIS) reporting.

Performance Rating

D Superior Performance	7	8	9
D Satisfactory Performance	4	5	6
D Partial Performance	1	2	3
D Nonperformance			0

Indicator 3: Student Planning Intent

The expected outcome of this indicator is that planning is designed and implemented to maximize students' academic achievement and success in transitioning back to their communities and schools.

Process Guidelines-The following benchmarks represent the major elements of the indicator used to gather evidence to determine whether the indicator's intent is being met.

The program has individual student planning activities that include:

- 3.1 Developing for all non-exceptional student education (ESE) students written age/grade-appropriate individual academic plans (IAPs) that
 - Are based on entry assessments, past records, and post-placement goals
 - Are developed within 15 school days
 - Include specific, individualized, and measurable long-term goals for reading, writing/language arts, math, and career/technical areas
 - Include at least two short-term objectives per goal
 - Identify remedial strategies
 - Include a schedule for determining progress
- 3.2 Reviewing students' progress toward achieving their IAP goals and objectives during treatment team or other formal meetings by an educational representative and revising IAPs when needed
- 3.3 Developing for all special education students measurable annual individual educational plan (IEP) goals and short-term objectives or benchmarks that directly relate to students' identified academic, behavioral, and/or functional deficiencies and needs
- 3.4 Documenting students' progress toward meeting their IEP goals and providing IEP progress reports to parents as often as progress reports are sent home for all students
- 3.5 Developing electronic Personalized Education Plans (ePEPs) for all middle school students who entered grade 6 in the 2006-2007 school year or after based on their aspirations and goals for post-secondary education and possible careers using the online student advising system, Florida Academic Counseling and Tracking for Students (FACTS) via FACTS.org

Benchmark 3.2 and the requirement for short-term objectives, remedial strategies, and a schedule for determining progress on students' IAPs do not apply to programs serving students fewer than 40 calendar days.

QA Review Methods

- Review student educational files, progress monitoring plans, IAPs, IEPs, ePEPs, treatment files, and other appropriate documentation
- Interview instructional, guidance, and transition personnel, other appropriate personnel, and students
- Observe students' exit staffings and treatment team meetings, when possible

Clarification

Rule 6A-6.05281, FAC. requires that all Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) commitment, day treatment, or early delinquency intervention programs develop individual academic plans (IAPs) that include all the components listed in Benchmark 3.1. Long-term goals focus on instruction over an extended period of time (length of stay at the program) that are specific, attainable, and measurable. Entry assessment scores, past records, and post-placement goals should be used in the development of students' long-term IAP goals. Career goals should focus on career interest/employability skills assessment results.

Short-term instructional objectives are sub-steps or intermediate steps toward mastering a long-term goal. Each long-term goal should have at least two short-term objectives that specifically state what the student should know and be able to perform in relationship to the long-term goal.

IAPs must include evaluation criteria, procedures, and schedules for determining progress based on accurate assessments, resources, and instructional strategies. Additionally, remedial strategies to assist students in reaching their academic and career goals must be identified on their IAPs.

Students who have a high school diploma or the equivalent are not required to have IAPs but must be provided structured activities, such as serving as a peer tutor (if appropriate), career exploration, and participation in career/technical instruction or online college courses that address their individual needs. Career goals should be developed for these students.

Students should participate in the development, the review, and the revision of their IAPs and IEPs (individual performance contracts, treatment plans, progress monitoring plans, or other appropriate documents that include long-term educational goals and short-term instructional objectives for students). IAPs or individual educational plans (IEPs) for ESE students may substitute for progress monitoring plans if they address all of the required components.

Instructional personnel should use IAPs, IEPs, or progress monitoring plans for instructional planning and for tracking students' progress. IAPs for students performing at or above grade level must include appropriate goals and objectives but do not need to identify remedial strategies. IEPs for special education students should be individualized, include all information required by federal and state laws, and address students' academic, behavioral, and/or functional goals and objectives as appropriate. IEP short-term objectives or benchmarks should be written for students working toward the general Florida Sunshine State Standards (FSSS) based on individual school district's policies. Instructional personnel should have access to their students' IAPs/IEPs.

The students and an educational representative should participate in treatment team meetings. Written documentation of students' progress toward achieving their IAP goals should be submitted to the treatment team if an educational representative is unable to attend the meetings. Proper tracking and documentation of student progress may guide performance-based education that allows students performing below grade level to advance to their age-appropriate placements.

Middle school students' electronic Personal Education Plans (ePEPs) must be signed by the students, their teachers, the guidance counselors/academic advisors, and the parents (if possible). The plans should become a portfolio of information that students update each year with their guidance counselor. *Florida Statute Section 1003.4156* requires every middle school student to complete an ePEP on FACTS.org to be promoted to high school.

Access information and sample IAPs in the *Transition Guidebook/or Educational Personnel in Juvenile Justice Programs* at <http://www.criminologycenter.fsu.edu/jjeep/pdf/2005%20Transition%20guidebook.pdf>.

Performance Rating

D Superior Performance	7	8	9
D Satisfactory Performance	4	5	6
D Partial Performance	1	2	3
D Nonperformance			0

Indicator 4: Community Reintegration Intent

The expected outcome of this indicator is that transition-planning activities are designed and implemented to facilitate students' transition from a Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) program to the community, which may include school, peer groups, employment, and family reintegration.

Process Guidelines-The following benchmarks represent the major elements of the indicator used to gather evidence to determine whether the indicator's intent is being met.

The program has community reintegration activities that include:

- 4.1 Soliciting and documenting participation from parents, families, and representatives from the communities to which students will return that is focused on transition planning and activities
- 4.2 Developing age-appropriate educational exit transition plans (with input from an educational representative at students' final exit staffings) that accurately identify, at a minimum, students' desired diploma options, anticipated next educational placements, post-release educational plans, aftercare providers, job or career/technical training plans, and the parties responsible for implementing the plans
- 4.3 Notifying the transition contacts in students' receiving school districts at least one week prior to their scheduled release from the program

Benchmark 4.1 requirements are not applicable to programs that only serve students fewer than 40 calendar days.

QA Review Methods

- Review closed files, treatment team/transition team notes, and educational exit transition plans
- Interview transition contact, guidance counselors, treatment/transition team members, other appropriate personnel, and students
- Observe students' exit staffings and treatment team meetings, when possible

Clarification

The students, the parents/guardians, the juvenile probation officers (JPOs), the aftercare/re-entry counselors, zoned school personnel, other stakeholders, and educational representatives should participate in students' treatment/transition team meetings. All stakeholders should be informed about students' needs before they return to their home, school, and/or community settings. Education personnel and treatment staff should retain evidence of solicitation of family and community participation.

Transition services for in-county students should include contacting the school district transition contacts to identify students' appropriate next educational placements. Information provided to the transition contacts should include the student's name, date of birth, name of the sending program, expected release date, and contact information for requesting records. **Determination of students' next educational placements should be coordinated by the receiving school district's transition contact and follow the school district protocol for students transitioning from a juvenile justice or prevention program.** If the transition contact informs the sending school of a student's next educational placement prior to his/her departure from the program, efforts should be made to contact the representatives of the receiving school to ensure students' successful transition.

Transition services should address post-release activities, such as post-secondary education, career/technical education, employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, and community participation.

The students, the parents/guardians, and educational representatives should participate in exit plan development at all transition meetings in person or via telephone or e-mail. Parties responsible for implementing the exit transition plans may include the parents/guardians, the JPOs, the aftercare/re-entry counselors, the zoned school personnel, and/or mentors.

Unanticipated transfers should be documented to indicate that exit planning was not possible.

Access more information in the *Transition Guidebook for Educational Personnel in Juvenile Justice Programs* at <http://www.criminologycenter.fsu.edu/jjeep/pdf/2005%20Transition%20guidebook.pdf>.

See the school district transition contacts list: <http://www.criminologycenter.fsu.edu/jjeep/contacts-transition.php>
Each school district is responsible for updating its transition contact information.

Performance Rating

D Superior Performance	7	8	9
D Satisfactory Performance	4	5	6
D Partial Performance	1	2	3
D Nonperformance			0

Educational Standard Two: Service Delivery

The service delivery standard is composed of four indicators that address curriculum, reading, instructional delivery, exceptional student education (ESE), and educational support services. Service delivery activities ensure that students are provided with educational opportunities that will best prepare them for successful re-entry into community, school, and/or work settings.

Indicator 5: Academic Curriculum and Instruction

The expected outcome of this indicator is that students have the opportunity to receive an education that focuses on their assessed educational needs and is appropriate to their future educational plans, allowing them to progress toward obtaining high school diplomas or the equivalent.

Indicator 6: Reading Curriculum and Instruction

The expected outcome of this indicator is that students who have reading deficiencies are identified and provided with direct reading instruction and services that address their strengths, weaknesses, and abilities in the five construct areas of reading.

Indicator 7: Employability and Career Curriculum and Instruction

The expected outcome of this indicator is that students have the opportunity to acquire the skills necessary to transfer to a career and technical institution after release and/or obtain employment.

Indicator 8: Specially Designed Instruction and Related Services

The expected outcome of this indicator is that programs provide equal access to education for all students, regardless of functional ability, disability, or behavioral characteristics.

Indicator 5: Academic Curriculum and Instruction Intent

The expected outcome of this indicator is that students have the opportunity to receive an education that focuses on their assessed educational needs and is appropriate to their future educational plans, allowing them to progress toward obtaining high school diplomas or the equivalent.

Process Guidelines-The following benchmarks represent the major elements of the indicator used to gather evidence to determine whether the indicator's intent is being met.

The program offers academic curriculum and instruction through:

- 5.1 Required diploma options that include standard, special, General Educational Development (GED), and GED Exit Option, as appropriate
- 5.2 A substantial year-round curriculum designed to provide students with educational services based on the Florida Course Code Directory and Instructional Personnel Assignments, descriptions of the courses in which students are enrolled, and the Florida Sunshine State Standards (FSSS)
- 5.3 Individualized instruction and a variety of instructional strategies that are documented in lesson plans and demonstrated in all classroom settings; instruction that is based on individual academic plans (IAPs), individual educational plans (IEPs), and students' ability levels in reading, writing, and mathematics for all content areas being taught; and a variety and balance of targeted and appropriate teaching strategies to accommodate students' auditory, visual, kinesthetic, and/or tactile learning styles

For programs with duration of fewer than 40 calendar days, the educational component may be limited to tutorial activities and career employability skills.

QA Review Methods

- Review students' educational files, work folders, course schedules, class schedules, curriculum documents and materials, lesson plans, and other appropriate documentation
- Interview instructional personnel, educational administrators, other appropriate personnel, and students
- Observe educational settings, activities, and instruction

Clarification

Courses and activities should be age-appropriate and based on students' individual needs and post-placement goals. Programs should prepare each student so that he/she has the opportunity to obtain a high school diploma through his/her chosen graduation program.

The General Educational Development (GED) and the GED Exit Option diploma options should be offered to students who meet the criteria. GED testing preparation materials should be available to all students who choose these diploma options and may be integrated and/or modified to best meet students' needs. Students must be at least 18 years old or (if 16 or 17 years old) have obtained an age waiver before being provided the opportunity to take the GED test.

A substantial curriculum will be used to meet state course descriptions and will not consist only of supplemental materials. The curriculum may be offered through a variety of scheduling options, such as block scheduling or performance-based education or by offering courses at times of the day that are most appropriate for the program's planned activities.

All curricula must address students' multiple academic levels. Instructional personnel should use long-term goals and short-term instructional objectives in students' individual academic plans (IAPs) and individual educational plans (IEPs) to guide individualized instruction and to provide educational services. Teachers should have knowledge of the content of their students' IEPs/IAPs.

Individualized instruction should include direct instruction (teacher-led instruction through explanation or modeling, followed by guided practice and independent practice) and be delivered in a variety of ways, including one-on-one instruction, computer-assisted instruction (CAI), thematic teaching, team teaching, experiential learning, cooperative learning, audio/visual presentations, lectures, group projects, and hands-on activities.

Performance Rating

D Superior Performance	7	8	9
D Satisfactory Performance	4	5	6
D Partial Performance	1	2	3
D Nonperformance			0

Indicator 6: Reading Curriculum and Instruction Intent

The expected outcome of this indicator is that students who have reading deficiencies are identified and provided with direct reading instruction and services that address their strengths, weaknesses, and abilities in the five construct areas of reading.

Process Guidelines-The following benchmarks represent the major elements of the indicator used to gather evidence to determine whether the indicator's intent is being met.

The program provides reading instruction and services through:

6.1 Explicit reading instruction that

- Addresses students' reading goals and objectives in their individual academic plans (IAPs), individual educational plans (IEPs), or progress monitoring plans
- Includes more than one class period of reading intervention (if required by the school district comprehensive reading plan) for disfluent secondary level students based on school district fluency scores
- Uses curricula identified in the current school district comprehensive reading plan

6.2 Progress monitoring using assessments identified in the school district comprehensive reading plan and reporting the data to the Department of Education (DOE) three times a year

6.3 Reading opportunities and literacy enrichment activities during the school day

6.4 Diagnostic reading assessment(s) identified in the school district comprehensive reading plan administered to students who are not progressing in reading based on progress monitoring data to

- Determine students' reading deficiencies in the five construct areas
- Modify students' initial reading goals, objectives, and remedial strategies based on the assessment results

Programs that serve students fewer than 40 calendar days are only required to meet benchmark 6.3.

QA Review Methods

- Review the school district comprehensive reading plan, progress monitoring data, student educational files, assessment tests, MIS records, IAPs, progress monitoring plans, and other appropriate documentation
- Interview personnel responsible for assessments, the reading teacher, other appropriate personnel, and students
- Observe educational settings, activities, and instruction to verify that the assessments used are appropriate for the areas to be assessed and for the ages and grade levels of the student

Clarification

Students who do not have reading deficiencies should be provided opportunities for reading practice and enrichment activities in their regular English/language arts or reading curriculum. These services are evaluated under Indicator 5: Academic Curriculum and Instruction.

Curriculum placement testing should be completed if required by the curriculum approved for use in the school district comprehensive reading plan.

The program's reading curricula should follow the school district comprehensive reading plan approved by Just Read, Florida! for the current school year, be age- and grade-appropriate, address the five areas of reading, and have evidence that it is effective with at-risk populations. Explicit reading instruction must be provided via a variety of strategies and should be aligned with the school district comprehensive reading plan.

Students' reading progress should be monitored at least three times per year (for Survey periods 2, 3, and 5) and reported through the Progress Monitoring and Reporting Network (PMRN) or automated student databases system. All schools reporting through the PMRN must register at <http://www.fcrr/pmrn/index.htm> to enter progress monitoring scores; there is no automatic registration. For more information or for assistance with PMRN registration, contact a support specialist at (850) 644-0931 or at helpdesk@fcrr.org.

All students should have frequent access to an abundant supply of leisure reading materials aligned with school district policy. Reading enrichment activities may include whole class novel reading with discussion, newspaper activities, book clubs, projects related to books read, reading of plays, role playing based on a book, written book reviews, and sustained silent reading.

A reading diagnostic assessment that addresses the five construct areas should be available to assess students who have reading deficiencies and have shown little improvement in reading skill development after reading intervention strategies have been implemented. (Diagnostic assessment of phonemic awareness deficiencies is not necessary for students who score at or above grade level on the phonics portion of the reading diagnostic assessment.) An individual who has had the appropriate training should be available to administer the assessment(s).

For more information on reading diagnostic assessment, please refer to *Diagnostic Instruments Appropriate for Primary and Secondary Levels* at <http://www.fim.edu/doe/bin00014/progress/diagnostic.pdf>.

Performance Rating

D Superior Performance	7	8	9
D Satisfactory Performance	4	5	6
D Partial Performance	1	2	3
D Nonperformance			0

Indicator 7: Employability and Career Curriculum and Instruction

Intent

The expected outcome of this indicator is that students may acquire the skills necessary to transfer to a career/technical institution and/or obtain employment after his/her release.

Process Guidelines-The following benchmarks represent the major elements of the indicator used to gather evidence to determine whether the indicator's intent is being met.

Type 1 programs provide curricular activities in educational settings based on students' entry assessments, individual academic plans (IAPs), and individual educational plans (IEPs) that:

- 7.1 Address employability, social, and life skills through courses offered for credit or integrate the skills into other courses already offered for credit; curricula must be based on state and school board standards, and instruction must follow course descriptions
- 7.2 Include a career and education planning course in grades 7 or 8 that provides students career exploration opportunities and resources
- 7.3 Are delivered through individualized instruction and a variety of instructional strategies that are documented in lesson plans and demonstrated in all classroom settings
- 7.4 Address employability, social, and life skills instruction and career exploration or the hands-on technical training needs of every student who has received a high school diploma or its equivalent

Type 2 programs provide curricular activities in educational settings based on students' entry assessments, IAPs, and IEPs that:

- 7.5 Provide all students with a broad scope of career exploration and prerequisite skill training based on their abilities/interests/aptitudes
- 7.6 Offer instruction and courses for credit and follow course descriptions or career education course requirements

Type 3 programs provide curricular activities in educational settings based on students' entry assessments, IAPs, and IEPs that:

- 7.7 Provide access for all students, as appropriate, to hands-on career and technical training, career and technical competencies, and the prerequisites needed for entry into a specific occupation
- 7.8 Offer instruction and courses for credit and follow course descriptions or career education course requirements

QA Review Methods

- Review students' educational files, work folders, and course schedules; class schedules; curriculum Documents and materials; lesson plans; and other appropriate documentation
- Interview instructional personnel, educational, administrators, other appropriate personnel, and students
- Observe educational settings, classroom activities, and instruction

Clarification

This indicator addresses the requirements outlined in the Department of Education (DOE) and the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) Multiagency State Plan for Career Education for Youth in DJJ Educational Facilities. Career education types by program are available at <http://www.djj.state.fl.us/Education/educationstatus.html>.

Type I programs--Career curriculum and activities may be offered as specific courses, integrated into one or more core courses offered for credit, and/or provided through thematic approaches. These should include employability and social skills instruction appropriate to students' needs; lesson plans, materials, and activities that reflect cultural diversity; character education; and skills training related to health, life management, decision making, interpersonal relationships, communication, lifelong learning, and self-determination. Fine or performing arts should be offered to assist students in attaining the skills necessary to make a successful transition back into community, school, and/or work settings.

Courses and activities should be age-appropriate. Courses in employability, social skills, and life skills include, but are not limited to:

- Employability skills for youth
- Personal, career, and school development (PCSD)
- Peer counseling
- Life management skills
- Physical education (P.E.), health, and fine arts

Type 2 programs-Career curriculum includes Type 1 program course content in addition to the areas described in these benchmarks. Exploring and gaining knowledge of a wide variety of occupational options and the levels of effort required to achieve them are essential. Prerequisite skill training refers to helping students understand the particular skills needed to be successful in specific careers. Instruction should focus on career exploration based on students' interests and aptitudes, job seeking skills, coping capabilities, and conflict resolution.

Type 3 programs-Career curriculum includes Type 1 program course content in addition to the areas described in these benchmarks, but does not include Type 2 requirements. All students in Type 3 programs should have appropriate access to hands-on career and technical programs, direct work experiences, job shadowing, and youth apprenticeship programs, as appropriate. (Appropriateness is determined by age and behavior.) Type 3 career education programs should have evidence of career and technical curricula that offers hands-on courses and training in which students may earn certificates of completion. Occupational completion

points (OCPs) can be used to document completion of career/technical education.

Students who have obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent should participate in the educational program's employability, social, and life skills activities and career/technical programs and/or may be able to enroll in community college courses via an articulation agreement.

The Middle School Reform A++ Implementation requires that career and educational planning courses for all 7th or 8th graders include career exploration using the Choices program or a comparable cost-effective program; educational planning using the online student advising system, Florida Academic Counseling and Tracking for Students (FACTS) via FACTS.org; and completion of an electronic Personal Education Plan (ePEP).

Florida Ready to Work is an innovative, workforce education and economic development program that offers a career readiness certificate. This program provides students/jobseekers with a standard credential that certifies their workplace readiness and ability to succeed on the job. The program is funded through the State of Florida. For additional information, call (866) 429-2334 or e-mail ReadytoWork@fldoe.org.

Performance Rating

D Superior Performance	7	8	9
D Satisfactory Performance	4	5	6
D Partial Performance	1	2	3
D Nonperformance			0

Indicator 8: Specially Designed Instruction and Related Services

Intent

The expected outcome of this indicator is that programs provide equal access to education for all students, regardless of functional ability, disability, or behavioral characteristics.

Process Guidelines-The following benchmarks represent the major elements of the indicator used to gather evidence to determine whether the indicator's intent is being met.

The program provides educational support services to all students as needed, including:

8.1 Documenting the initiation of the exceptional student education (ESE) process

8.2 Completing the ESE process:

- Reviewing current individual educational plans (IEPs) for students with disabilities and educational plans (EPs) for gifted students to determine whether they are appropriate
- Convening IEP/EP meetings or following required procedures to amend the plans as soon as possible when the IEP/EP services are not appropriate to meet the students' goals and objectives as written
- Soliciting and documenting participation from parents in ESE staffings and IEP development; mailing copies of IEPs/EPs to parents who do not attend the meetings
- Ensuring that all transition-related requirements (including career plans) for students who are 14 or older are addressed in their IEPs
- Providing an educational representative who is knowledgeable of the educational resources within the local school district to serve as the local education agency (LEA) representative (The LEA representative must meet the criteria noted in the clarification on p. 29.)

8.3 Implementing specially designed instruction and related services that are outlined in students' IEPs

8.4 Providing services as outlined in the students' plans for English language learners (ELL), students eligible under Section 504, and gifted students

QA Review Methods

- Review IEPs, EPs, Section 504 plans, limited English proficiency (LEP) plans, cooperative agreement and/or contract, student files, records requests, support services consultation logs, and other appropriate documentation
- Interview ESE personnel, educational administrators, instructional and support personnel, other appropriate personnel, and students

Clarification

Students participating in exceptional student education (ESE) programs should be provided all corresponding services and documentation (i.e., written parental notification and procedural safeguards) required by federal and state laws. Initiation of the ESE process may include continuing ESE services for in-county students, developing course schedules based on their current individual educational plans (IEPs) and educational plans (EPs), enrolling students, recording students' attendance, notifying appropriate personnel of students who require ESE services, and notifying parents regarding IEPIEP review meetings or request to amend IEPs.

The program must document solicitation of parent involvement and reasonable notification (10-14 days prior) to attend IEPIEP meetings. The IEPIEP team must include the parents, the local education agency (LEA) representative, the students' ESE teacher, a general education teacher who teaches the students, the students (as appropriate for gifted students) beginning at age 14, and one who can interpret instructional implications of evaluation results (and who may serve in other roles as well). The meeting may be held without the parent if at least two notices were provided or if the parent responded to the first notice. The program must document (with dates) the mailing of IEPs/IEPs to parents who do not attend the meetings.

According to *Rule 6A-6.03028, Florida Administrative Code (FAC.)*, IEPs must include a statement regarding diploma options for students beginning in 8th grade, planning for transition services on or before students' 14th birthday, and a statement of transition service needs. For students who are age 16, IEPs must include appropriate measurable post-secondary goals based on age-appropriate transition assessments related to training/education, employment, and independent living skills (if appropriate) and transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the students in reaching those goals. Transition plans may be written for students before age 14 who are at risk of dropping out of school or who have significant disabilities or complex needs. The transition statements/plans in students' IEPs cannot be used in place of exit transition plans.

According to *Rule 6A-6.03028, FAC.*, and *Section 300.321 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations*, an LEA representative is a "representative of the school district who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities, is knowledgeable about the general curriculum, and is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the school district." The students' ESE teacher may also serve as the LEA representative if he/she meets the criteria; non-school district employees must obtain written approval from the school district ESE director to serve as the LEA representative.

ESE teachers cannot serve as both the ESE teacher and the general education teacher in the same classroom.

Students who are on the special diploma track must be served in an appropriate model: co-teaching, ESE support facilitation, or self-contained classroom. For more information on ESE service delivery models, refer to the Florida Course Code Directory.

Students who are English language learners (ELL), eligible under Section 504, or gifted and who have corresponding plans to address these needs, must be provided all of the services indicated on those plans, including mental and physical health services. Students' support and educational services should be integrated, and related services, accommodations, and modifications for appropriate students should be documented. ELL students should have current limited English proficiency (LEP) plans to address their language needs.

Consultative services should be provided to instructional personnel who serve ESE students and to students in accordance with their IEPs. Consultative logs should document specifically how the student is progressing and what strategies are used to assist the student.

The decision to change services must be addressed during IEP team meetings or by following required amendment procedures based upon current, documented information regarding the students' progress and need for services. A determination regarding gifted services would be an EP team decision. The parent must be provided prior written notice of a proposed change in services before the change occurs, and the IEPIEP must be revised, as appropriate.

Performance Rating

D Superior Performance	7	8	9
D Satisfactory Performance	4	5	6
D Partial Performance	1	2	3
D Nonperformance			0

Educational Standard Three: Educational Resources

The educational resources standard is composed of four indicators that are designed to ensure that students in juvenile justice educational programs are provided with educational personnel, services, materials, and the environments necessary to successfully accomplish their educational goals and to ensure collaboration and effective communication among all parties involved in the educational programs of juvenile justice facilities.

Indicator 9: Collaboration

The expected outcome of this indicator is that facility staff and school district personnel collaborate to ensure that high quality educational services are provided to at-risk students.

Indicator 10: Educational Personnel Qualifications

The expected outcome of this indicator is that the most qualified instructional personnel are employed to educate students in juvenile justice schools.

Indicator 11: Professional Development and Teacher Retention

The expected outcome of this indicator is that instructional personnel are provided continuing education that will enhance the quality of services provided to at-risk and delinquent students and that strategies are in place to retain highly qualified instructional personnel.

Indicator 12: Learning Environment and Resources

The expected outcome of this indicator is that funding provides for substantial educational services and that students have access to high-quality materials, resources, and an environment that enhances their academic achievement and prepares them for a successful return to school and the community.

Indicator 9: Collaboration Intent

The expected outcome of this indicator is that facility staff and school district personnel collaborate to ensure high-quality educational services are provided to at-risk students.

Process Guidelines-The following benchmarks represent the major elements of the indicator used to gather evidence to determine whether the indicator's intent is being met.

The program facilitates collaboration to provide:

- 9.1 A minimum of 300 minutes of daily instruction, or the weekly equivalent
- 9.2 Demonstrated and documented communication among school district administrators, facility administrators, facility staff, and school personnel on a regularly scheduled basis
- 9.3 Varied community involvement that is solicited, documented, and focused on educational and transition activities
- 9.4 Classroom behavioral management procedures that are followed by educational personnel and facility staff, are understood by all students, and include consistent use of reinforcement for positive student behavior

Benchmark 9.3 requirements are not applicable to programs that only serve students fewer than 40 calendar days.

Student participation in off-site community activities is not required for high-risk and maximum-risk programs.

QA Review Methods

- Review the annual school calendar, bell schedule, faculty meeting agendas, management meeting minutes, educational written procedures, volunteer participation documentation, behavior management plan, and other appropriate documentation
- Interview school district administrators, on-site administrators, instructional personnel, students, and other appropriate personnel
- Observe educational settings and faculty meetings, when possible

Clarification

Programs must provide a minimum of 240 days per year and 300 minutes of daily instruction (or the weekly equivalent). Time for student movement is not included in the 300 minutes and should be reflected on the schedule. Facility staff and educational personnel should collaborate to ensure that students are in school on time and receive the required instructional minutes. Educational administrators should document steps taken to address issues when facility staff are not transitioning students according to the bell schedule.

Programs must develop and follow a plan to provide continued access to instruction for students who are removed from class for an extensive amount of time due to behavior problems. Exceptional student education (ESE) students who are removed from class must be able to participate in the general educational curriculum and work toward meeting their individual educational plan (IEP) goals and objectives.

It is the responsibility of the on-site educational administrators to ensure that all educational staff are informed about the program and the school district's purpose, policies, expected student outcomes, and school improvement initiatives. Communication among relevant parties (the school district, the Department of Juvenile Justice [DJJJ], the providers, and the educational and the program staff) should be ongoing to facilitate smooth operation of the educational program.

Community involvement activities should be integrated into the educational program's curriculum and can be aligned with school-to-work initiatives. Parent involvement should be evident; parents should be involved in successful transition of their student to school and/or employment. School advisory councils (SACs) should include members from the community and parents, when possible.

Community involvement activities should be documented with dates and should be from a variety of sources, such as tutors, mentors, clerical and/or classroom volunteers, career days, guest speakers, and business partners to enhance the educational program and student involvement in the community. Student volunteerism within the program and mentoring/role modeling experiences are also examples of community involvement.

Classroom management should be incorporated into the program's behavior management plan. The term "classroom" refers to any setting or location that is utilized by the program for instructional purposes. Equitable behavior/classroom management includes treating all students fairly, humanely, and according to their individual behavioral needs. Behavior and classroom management policies should be developed and implemented collaboratively by educational personnel and facility staff during instructional delivery activities.

Classroom management procedures should be designed to empower students to become independent learners and to promote positive self-esteem. Instructional personnel and facility staff members should provide positive reinforcement for appropriate student behavior. Where appropriate, individual functional behavior assessment and behavior intervention plans should be used.

Performance Rating

D Superior Performance	7	8	9
D Satisfactory Performance	4	5	6
D Partial Performance	1	2	3
D Nonperformance			0

Indicator 10: Educational Personnel Qualifications Intent

The expected outcome of this indicator is that the most qualified instructional personnel are employed to educate students in juvenile justice schools.

Process Guidelines-The following benchmarks represent the major elements of the indicator used to gather evidence to determine whether the indicator's intent is being met.

All instructional personnel:

10.1 In core academic areas have professional or temporary Florida teaching certification, a valid statement of eligibility, or proof of accepted application for teaching certification

10.2 In noncore academic areas (including social, employability, and career education courses) have teaching certification or document approval to teach through the school board policy for the use of noncertified instructional personnel based on documented expert knowledge or skill

QA Review Methods

- Review educational personnel files, teaching certificates, statements of eligibility, and other appropriate documentation
- Interview instructional personnel, educational administrators, and other appropriate personnel

Clarification

Instructional personnel are the persons who are delivering instruction in the classroom; a *teacher of record* should be the full-time classroom teacher who delivers the instruction. Schools should hire and assign teachers in core academic areas according to their areas of certification. The *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) establishes specific requirements for "highly qualified teachers" (HQT) in the core academic areas (English/language arts, reading, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography).

A statement of eligibility and/or an application that confirms that the applicant is *not eligible* for certification will not fulfill the requirements of this indicator.

All instructional personnel whose salaries are supported wholly or in part by Title I, Part A funds, must meet HQT requirements within the timelines prescribed in NCLB. For programs that receive Title I, Part A funds, documentation must be retained to indicate that parents have been notified by letter if their child's teacher is teaching out-of-field for more than four weeks.

Reading teachers must have reading certification, documented evidence of the completion of the reading endorsement requirements, or documentation of the completion of at least two reading competencies for every year of teaching reading at the current program. New reading teachers should document enrollment in coursework leading toward reading endorsement or reading certification.

Teachers who pass the middle grades integrated curriculum exam may become certified to teach over 100 core courses (*excluding* reading).

Any teacher hired after the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year will not be able to use the High, Objective, Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE) option to meet HQT requirements. However, teachers who completed all HOUSSE requirements prior to the end of the 2006-2007 school year maintain their highly qualified status.

Programs and school districts should provide evidence that they are actively seeking qualified teachers when teacher positions are vacant or long-term substitutes are being used. Substitute teachers must be approved by the school district and comply with the requirements in Benchmark 10.1 for core academic subject areas if they fill a teacher vacancy for eight consecutive weeks or longer. After teaching eight consecutive weeks, substitute teachers must provide, at a minimum, documentation of an accepted application for teaching certification. Post-secondary instructors of dual enrollment students are not required to have K-12 teaching certifications.

The use and approval of non certified personnel to teach noncore academic subjects must be documented and based on local school board policy.

Both the program provider and the school district should have input into hiring all instructional personnel through the hiring process or through the cooperative agreement and/or the contract. Teachers in school district-operated programs and teachers who are contracted with a private provider must meet the requirements of this indicator.

Performance Rating

D Superior Performance	7	8	9
D Satisfactory Performance	4	5	6
D Partial Performance	1	2	3
D Nonperformance			0

Indicator 11: Professional Development and Teacher Retention

Intent

The expected outcome of this indicator is that instructional personnel are provided continuing education that will enhance the quality of services provided to at-risk and delinquent students and that strategies are in place to retain highly qualified instructional personnel.

Process Guidelines-The following benchmarks represent the major elements of the indicator used to gather evidence to determine whether the indicator's intent is being met.

All instructional personnel:

- 11.1 Develop and use written professional development plans that incorporate school improvement plan (SIP) initiatives to foster professional growth and participate in a beginning teacher program when appropriate
- 11.2 Receive continual annual professional development training or continuing education (including college course work) based on educational program needs, actual instructional assignments, professional development plans and/or annual teacher evaluations, and quality assurance (QA) review findings (Professional development training must be from a variety of sources on such topics as instructional techniques, reading and literacy skills development, content-related skills and knowledge, working with delinquent and at-risk youths, and exceptional student education [ESE] and English language learners [ELL] programs.)

The educational program administration:

- 11.3 Has strategies in place to recruit and retain highly qualified instructional personnel

QA Review Methods

- Review educational personnel files, training records, professional development plans, SIPs, and other appropriate documentation
- Interview instructional personnel, educational administrators, and other appropriate personnel

Clarification

A ++ legislation requires that professional development plans be established by district school boards and incorporate school improvement plans.

Professional development plans are used to lead teachers toward professional growth or development. Instructional personnel should develop or have input into creating their individual plans to address their strengths and weaknesses. Professional development plans should be used as working documents and evaluation tools based on the school district's policy for human resource development.

Teachers should be provided the opportunity to attend professional development training to support their professional growth. Although routine training in such areas as policies and procedures, safety, and program orientation is important, the majority of professional development training should be related to instructional techniques, teaching delinquent and at-risk students, and the respective content areas in which instructional personnel are assigned to teach.

All instructional personnel (including noncertified personnel) should have access and opportunity to participate in school district professional development training on a continual annual basis. Professional development should qualify for in-service points for certification renewal.

Strategies to help retain highly qualified instructional personnel may include establishing a teacher mentor program, assigning teachers to teach in their certification areas, allowing time for teachers to collaborate with their colleagues, and creating positive work conditions or incentives for teachers to work in juvenile justice facilities.

Performance Rating

D Superior Performance	7	8	9
D Satisfactory Performance	4	5	6
D Partial Performance	1	2	3
D Nonperformance			0

Indicator 12: Learning Environment and Resources

Intent

The expected outcome of this indicator is that funding provides for substantial educational services and that students have access to high-quality materials, resources, and an environment that enhances their academic achievement and prepares them for a successful return to school and the

Process Guidelines-The following benchmarks represent the major elements of the indicator used to gather evidence to determine whether the indicator's intent is being met.

The program's educational environment and resources include:

- 12.1 An adequate number of instructional staff and educational support personnel
- 12.2 An adequate quantity of educational supplies and instructional materials that are appropriate to students' ages and ability levels, including a variety of diverse instructional texts for core content areas and high-interest leisure reading materials for students (including fiction and nonfiction) that address the characteristics and interests of adolescent readers
- 12.3 Media materials, equipment, and technology for use by teachers and students
- 12.4 An environment that is conducive to learning
- 12.5 Access to the Florida Virtual School (FLVS) for instructional purposes when appropriate
- 12.6 Active pursuit of resources such as grants, scholarships, and business and/or community partnerships

The reading material requirements are not applicable to programs that only serve students fewer than 40 calendar days.

QA Review Methods

- Review the cooperative agreement and/or contract, available media resources and technology, student-to-teacher ratio, curricula and instruction materials, Internet policy, and other appropriate documentation
- Interview school district administrators, on-site administrators, instructional personnel, other appropriate personnel, and students
- Observe educational settings
- Discuss findings with the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) quality assurance reviewer when possible

Clarification

Depending on the type and the size of the program, support personnel may include principals, assistant principals, school district administrators who oversee program operations, curriculum coordinators, exceptional student education (ESE) personnel, guidance counselors, lead educators, registrars, and transition specialists. The student-to-teacher ratio should take into account the nature of the instructional activity, the diversity of the academic levels of students in the classroom, access to technology for instructional purposes, the need to individualize instruction, and the use of classroom paraprofessionals.

Technology and media materials should be appropriate to meet the needs of the program's educational staff and student population. Leisure reading materials available should be aligned with school district policy. Components that impact the learning environment include, but are not limited to, facilities, school climate, organization, and appropriate materials, supplies, and technology.

All students should have access to computer technology to progress toward achieving career and/or educational goals, including access to the Florida Virtual School (FLVS) when students need courses for graduation that are not offered at the program. Additionally, programs should have a policy regarding students' Internet use.

School districts and programs should collaborate to secure additional resources such as workforce development grants, on-the-job training opportunities for students, and facility, business, and community partnerships.

Performance Rating

D Superior Performance	7	8	9
D Satisfactory Performance	4	5	6
D Partial Performance	1	2	3
D Nonperformance			0

Educational Standard Four: Contract Management

The contract management standard consists of a single indicator that addresses the role and responsibility of school districts that serve juvenile justice students to ensure local oversight of juvenile justice educational programs.

Indicator 13: School District Monitoring, Accountability, and Evaluation

The expected outcome of this indicator is that the school district monitors and assists programs in providing high-quality educational services and accurately reports student and staff data for accountability and evaluation purposes.

Indicator 13: School District Monitoring, Accountability, and Evaluation Intent

The expected outcome of this indicator is that the school district monitors and assists programs in providing high quality educational services and accurately reports student and staff data for accountability and evaluation purposes.

Process Guidelines-The following benchmarks represent the major elements of the indicator used to gather evidence to determine whether the indicator's intent is being met.

The school district ensures that:

- 13.1 The program submits a self-report in a timely manner
- 13.2 The program is assigned an individual school number and accurately reports all management information system (MIS) data (grades, credits, student progression, certificates, entry and withdrawal dates, valid withdrawal codes, entry/exit assessment scores, and diplomas earned)
- 13.3 The program maintains accurate daily student attendance records in the MIS
- 13.4 The program participates in the Adequate Yearly Progress (A YP) process and accurately reports its statewide assessment participation rate data (The required participation rate is 95%.)
- 13.5 The program is included in the current school district comprehensive reading plan approved by Just Read, Florida! and receives the support services identified in the plan (i.e., assistance from a reading coach, walk-throughs, fidelity checks, and literacy assessment teams)
- 13.6 The contract manager or designee provides appropriate oversight and assistance to the educational program that include conducting and documenting an annual evaluation of the educational program
- 13.7 There is a current and approved (by the Department of Education [DOE] and the Department of Juvenile Justice [DJJ]) cooperative agreement with the DJJ and a contract with the educational provider when educational services are not operated by the school district; the terms are being followed, including monitoring quarterly educational expenditure reports

The annual evaluation requirement is not applicable to charter school programs. The remainder of the indicators will be rated based on the program's charter.

QA Review Methods

- Review the cooperative agreement and/or the contract, educational evaluations, expenditure reports, MIS data, relevant correspondence between the school district and the program, and other appropriate documentation
- Interview school district administrators, on-site administrators, lead educators, and other appropriate personnel
- Review state assessment participation results based on state AYP calculations

Clarification

The school district and program personnel should collaboratively develop the self-report and review its contents for accuracy prior to submission to the Juvenile Justice Educational Enhancement Program (JJEPP) offices.

Each program should have an individual school number that is not shared with another school, including other Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) schools. Only enrolled students should be reported under the program's unique school number, and adult county jail students should be reported under separate school numbers. All students' information contained in Survey 1 through Survey 5 should be reported under the same school number, and the appropriate withdrawal code should be used for all existing students.

Quality assurance (QA) reviewers verify that student information is accurately reported in the management information system (MIS). Accountability issues should be clarified in the cooperative agreement and/or the contract and in the program's written procedures. All students should have a valid withdrawal code each year unless they are still enrolled in the school at the end of the school year. Major discrepancies in attendance and full-time equivalent (FTE) membership are reported to Department of Education (DOE) and may affect the program's QA review score.

The school district should oversee administration of the statewide assessment to ensure that all eligible students participate. Because school districts are responsible for submitting accurate data to the DOE, they should assist programs in correcting their 2007-2008 enrollment and testing data.

Section 1003.52 (13), Florida Statutes (F.s.) requires each school district to negotiate a cooperative agreement with the DJJ regarding the delivery of educational programs to students under the jurisdiction of DJJ. *Section 1003.52(11), F.s.*, also authorizes school districts to contract with private providers for the provision of DJJ educational programs. Contracts and cooperative agreements must be completed prior to the October FTE week and submitted to the DOE.

The school district contract manager (or designee) is expected to ensure that appropriate educational services are provided. The contract manager should document annual evaluation of the educational program and share the results with the lead educator. Additionally, the contract manager ensures that issues documented in QA reports are addressed in a timely manner.

The school district comprehensive reading plan must outline how the school district is planning to monitor the reading program, and the contract manager should ensure that support services identified in the plan are provided to the program.

School districts should have protocols and procedures in place that outline the re-entry services provided to students who are returning to the school district, identify persons who facilitate these services, oversee the implementation of these protocols/procedures, and collaborate with the school district transition contact.

School district contract managers must notify the JJEPP offices within 30 days of notification that a new DJJ program will be placed in their school districts and/or when the district becomes aware that a program in their district is scheduled to close. Additionally, contract managers are responsible for notifying JJEPP at least 30 days prior to a change in a DJJ program's educational provider.

The contract manager or designee should ensure that educational services are provided as required by the contract and/or the cooperative agreement and all applicable local, state, and federal education guidelines. If school districts contract with private providers for the educational services, an accounting of the expenditures identified in *State Board Rule 6A-6.052, Florida Administrative Code (FAC.)*, shall be required by the local school board.

Performance Rating

D Superior Performance	7	8	9
D Satisfactory Performance	4	5	6
D Partial Performance	1	2	3
D Nonperformance			0

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