Building Higher Education Pathways for Youth in Secure Treatment Facilities in California: A Call to Action

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Executive Summary

California is presented with an unprecedented opportunity to vault to the forefront of national juvenile justice practice by transforming its youth incarceration system from one focused overwhelmingly on punishment to one that can offer youth in confinement genuine opportunities to dramatically improve their lives. There is growing momentum across California to build viable higher education pathways—whether through college courses and credentials or vocational training—that can help incarcerated youth find passage to opportunity. Youth who were once seen as incarcerated people can now be seen as college students with bright futures.

This report is intended to help legislators, probation system leaders, educators, community-based organizations, impacted families, legislators, and the broader public understand what the research literature and field leaders have to say about the drivers of educational and life outcomes for incarcerated youth, proven and promising interventions to improve these outcomes, and the recommended elements for building higher education pathways for youth in secure treatment facilities in California, or so-called SYTF youth. It draws on an extensive scan of the research literature and 65 interviews with stakeholders connected to the juvenile justice system across California.

Section I: Risk Factors for Youth Incarceration, Post-Incarceration Outcomes, and the Promise of Higher Education for Changing Youth Trajectories

The first section of the report, "Risk Factors for Youth Incarceration, Post-Incarceration Outcomes, and the Promise of Higher Education for Changing Youth Trajectories," presents a literature review on risk factors for youth incarceration and long-term outcomes for youth after they exit confinement.

- It pinpoints several environmental, development and life course outcome risk factors for juvenile incarceration that reflect their history of harmful experiences as well as the prior life outcomes that will influence their chances for educational success while in confinement and beyond.
- The section also distills a mounting body of evidence showing that being confined as a juvenile causes reduced high school graduation, increased recidivism, increased adult crime and incarceration, and reduced adult employment.
- However, growing evidence supports the effectiveness of education in correctional settings as a turning point—particularly higher education—with prospects for decreasing the likelihood of reoffending and increasing connection to school and boosting hours worked in adulthood.

Section II: Proven and Promising Interventions, Key Insights and Best Practices from the Research Literature

- The second section of the report "Proven and Promising Interventions, Key Insights and Best Practices from the Research Literature," distills findings from an extensive review of the literature on "proven," or rigorously evaluated educational interventions for youth in confinement, as well as "promising" best practice recommendations.
- Although the existing literature has relatively few rigorous studies of educational interventions for youth in confinement, there are a handful of high quality "proven" studies that yield valuable guidance for practitioners. Three that are profiled in substantial depth include Read 180, Avon Park Youth Academy/Street Smart (APYA/SS) and Bard Prison Initiative. These programs showed substantial positive improvements in either education outcomes, employment outcomes or recidivism.
- Less rigorously evaluated interventions were also identified and two were reported in some depth in this section. Corrective reading and Re-Integration of Offenders-Youth (RIO-Y) showed positive effects on education outcomes, however, the quality of their evaluation studies do not warrant their recommendation as "proven" approaches at this time.
- Several promising practices were identified in the research literature building on a pivotal 2014 report by the U.S. Departments of Education and Justice titled *Guiding Principles for Providing High-Quality Education in Juvenile Justice Secure Care Settings*.
- The *Guiding Principles* report prompted numerous subsequent studies, aimed at summarizing empirical evidence backing the report's principles and augmenting its recommendations with practical findings from existing literature. This section of the report was designed to further this line of research, summarizing the key recommendations from Guiding Principles and subsequent studies. It particularly focuses on promising practices related to providing high-quality higher education programming and services for incarcerated youth. Key categories for the recommendations included building healthy institutional climates, securing and supporting qualified education staff, offering a rigorous and relevant curricula, and creating smooth reentry into communities. Recommended best practices for each of these components are discussed in detail.
- Given that the focus of the *Guiding Principles* report is on education for youth at secondary education levels, this section of the report also includes suggested practices in the literature for providing high quality higher education programming for incarcerated youth.

Section III: Building Higher Education Pathways for Youth in Secure Treatment Facilities in California: Guidance from the Literature and Field Practitioners

- The third section of the report, "Building Higher Education Pathways for Youth in Secure Treatment Facilities in California: Guidance from the Literature and Field Practitioners," synthesizes the main findings from the literature review alongside insights from 65 juvenile justice field leaders from across California and offers a menu of recommendations for creating effective higher education pathways for secure treatment youth in the state, setting them on a course for greater opportunity and success.
- Along with describing some key current challenges, this section of the report offers a framework for constructing higher education pathways that includes three essential pillars:
    1. **Administrative pathways** that encompass several institutional elements including policies, procedures, educational offerings, staffing, materials, and technological tools
    2. **Pathway supports** that include an array of decision-making and developmental supports that encourage a young person to embark on and persist on a higher education journey; and, lastly
    3. **Meaningful destinations** that signify the long-term end to which higher education pathways should ultimately lead such as a completed Bachelor's degrees or good paying jobs.
- Organized using this framework, 15 categories of recommendations are detailed that include the following: dual-enrollment offerings for secure treatment youth, effective instructional practices, qualified instructors and professional development, free courses and materials, program offerings and course variety, the provision of complete degree pathways, guided and integrated curricular pathways, access to adequate technology resources, systematic screening and service matching, creating a supportive facility climate, building interest and scaffolding a college identity, academic and financial aid advising, tutoring and supplemental instruction, transition planning and reentry support, and creating a community of belonging on campus.

Introduction

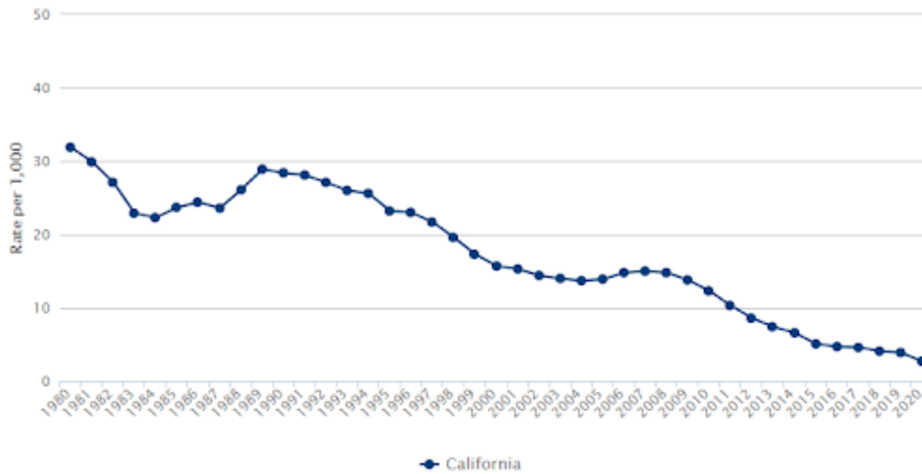
Over the past three decades, California's juvenile justice system has been transformed as juvenile arrest and confinement rates have plummeted. Juvenile felony arrests today are just one-tenth what they were in the early 1990s (see figure 1). The number of youth in confinement in the juvenile system has also decreased dramatically over the last two decades, down 81 percent since 2002 (see figure 2). Lastly, the number of youth who are charged in adult courts or transferred from juvenile to adult court has fallen by 95 percent since 2008. However, despite these notable improvements, there remains a pronounced racial and ethnic disparity in youth incarceration rates. In 2019, Black and Latino youth in California were 31.3 and 4.9 times more likely, respectively, than White youth to be committed to state confinement with the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). Furthermore, Black and Latino youth were 9.5 and 2.4 times more likely than their White counterparts to be designated a "ward of the state," leading to incarceration.[1]

California faces an unprecedented opportunity to vault to the forefront of national juvenile justice practice by transforming its youth incarceration system from one focused overwhelmingly on punishment to one that can offer youth in confinement genuine opportunities to dramatically improve their lives. There is growing momentum across California to build viable higher education pathways—whether through college courses and credentials or vocational training—that can help incarcerated youth find passage to opportunity. Youth who were once seen as incarcerated people can now be seen as college students with bright futures. An expansive body of research highlighting the plasticity of adolescent brains reinforces this vision. It demonstrates that human brains continue to develop rapidly into our twenties, marking adolescence as a sensitive and vital period of development with immense potential for life-altering change.[2]

[1] Ridolfi, L., Menart, R., & Villa, I. (2020). California Youth Face Heightened Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Division of Juvenile Justice: DJJ Realignment Requires State Oversight and Safeguards for Youth of Color. Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice.

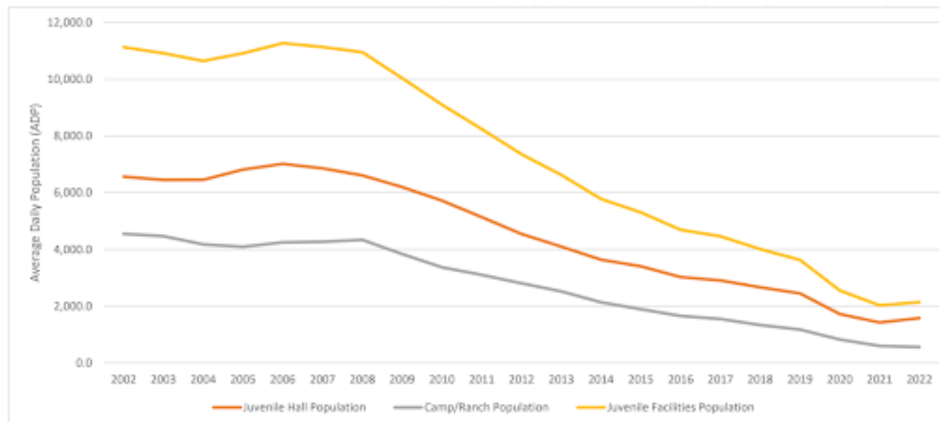
[2] National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2019). The promise of adolescence: Realizing opportunity for all youth.

Figure 1. Juvenile Felony Arrest Rate per 1,000: 1980 to 2020



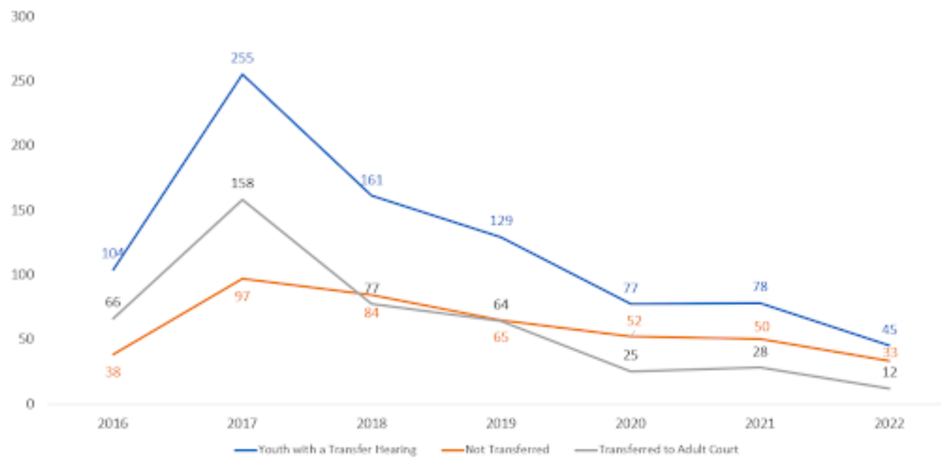
Definition: Number of felony arrests per 1,000 youth ages 10-17 (e.g., in 2020, the felony arrest rate among California juveniles was 2.7 arrests per 1,000 youth ages 10-17). Data Source: California Dept. of Justice, Crime Statistics: Arrests; California Dept. of Finance, Population Estimates and Projections (Dec. 2021).

Figure 2. Total Youth in Juvenile Confinement: Average Daily Population: 2002-2023



Board of State and Community Corrections, Juvenile Detention Profile Survey, 2023

Figure 3. Total Youth Direct Filed or Transferred to Adult Court (2003-21)



Fueling the momentum for bringing effective higher education pathways to youth in juvenile confinement is a shifting policy landscape in the state over just the past four years:

- **SB 114,** passed in 2023 provides $80 million in approved spending to County Offices of Education for alternative schools and the continuation of a $15 million allocation that connects youth in confinement to higher education pathways.
- In the **2022-23 budget,** substantial funding has been allocated that can be used to support building higher education pathways in the state[3]: Allocations include:
    - A $100 million one-time General Fund allocation to help county-operated juvenile facilities become more conducive to serving justice system-involved youth with a wide range of needs, focused on supporting trauma-informed care, restorative justice, and rehabilitative programming.
    - $25 million in ongoing funding to support the Rising Scholars Network, of which $15 million will fund ongoing implementation of model programming for juvenile justice-impacted students, as a grant program administered and supported by the Rising Scholars Network of the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

[3] https://legiscan.com/CA/text/AB178/2021; https://www.counties.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/csac_june_budget_bab_-_2022-06-29.pdf; https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB178; https://californiacompetes.org/resources/2022-23-budget-insights/

- $4 million to the University of California Office of the President for Underground Scholars programs serving incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals at all undergraduate-serving UC campuses.
- Lastly, $11.3 million to support the Project Rebound Consortium, which includes educational, outreach, transfer, and housing support services to assist formerly incarcerated individuals to enroll and succeed at the California State University.

- **SB 823,** passed in 2020, and commonly referred to as Juvenile Justice Realignment, transfers all youth committed to the California Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) back to counties and calls for the closure of DJJ by June 30, 2023. County probation departments, in partnership with education systems, will be tasked with providing adequate educational programming to a population that can be held in local confinement until the age of 25. SB 823 also creates a new statewide oversight body in the Office of Youth and Community Restoration (OYCR) within the California Health and Human Services Agency. OYCR will oversee data collection, research, technical assistance, and the newly created Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant Program.[4]
- **Senate Bill 416,** passed in 2021, ensures that college programs offered to incarcerated students by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) are provided by California Community Colleges, the California State University, the University of California, and/or other regionally accredited non-profit colleges or universities. This addresses the issue of for-profit institutions offering courses to incarcerated students that either do not confer credits that are transferable to a 4-year institution or do not offer translatable job skills.[5] While this law currently applies to those incarcerated in the adult system, it represents policy concerns applicable to youth in the juvenile system as well.
- **Senate Bill 716**, passed in 2019, requires county probation departments and the DJJ to provide access to online academic and career and technical education (CTE) programs to youth currently in detention who have completed their high school diploma or California equivalency certificate. The bill also encourages partnerships with local college campuses to serve youth in the community, allowing movement towards college as strategy for diverting youth away from the prison pipeline. Students must have access to online academic and CTE classes offered by public community colleges or universities. Academic courses must be transferable to a University of California or

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[4] https://probation.sccgov.org/juvenile-institutions/sb-823-djj-realignment#:~:text=SB%20823%20increases%20protections%20to,to%20the%20adult%20criminal%20system.&text=SB%20823%20also%20creates%20a,Health%20and%20Human%20Services%20Agency; https://www.counties.org/juvenile-justice-realignment; https://probation.acgov.org/juvenile-services/SB823.page?; https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2037&context=etd_projects

[5] Retrieved on July 15th, 2023 from https://www.michelsonpolicy.org/news/governor-signs-sb-416-making-california-nations-leader-in-prioritizing-education-access; Retrieved on July 15th, 2023 https://edsource.org/2021/whats-next-for-california-education-new-laws-and-vetoes/662277; Retrieved on July 15th, 2023 https://sanquentinnews.com/csu-la-graduates-more-than-two-dozen-incarcerated-students-at-lancaster-prison/

California State University school, and CTE courses must help prepare students for career entry. This law encourages, but does not require, Probation and DJJ to also offer on-site college course instruction at facilities.[6]

Report Overview

This report is intended to help legislators, probation system leaders, educators, community-based organizations, impacted families, legislators, and the broader public understand what the research literature and field leaders have to say about the drivers of educational and life outcomes for incarcerated youth, proven and promising interventions to improve these outcomes, and the recommended elements for building higher education pathways for youth in secure treatment facilities in California, or so-called SYTF youth.

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[6] Retrieved on July 8th, 2023 https://ylc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/SB-716-Press-Release.pdf; Retrieved on July 8th, 2023 https://www.ylc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/SB-716-Fact-Sheet.pdf

Section I: Risk Factors for Youth Incarceration, Post-Incarceration Outcomes, and the Promise of Higher Education for Changing Youth Trajectories

Drawing on a large scan of the research literature, this section describes the risk factors for youth entering detention that reflects their history of harmful experiences as well as the prior life outcomes that will influence their chances for educational success while in confinement and beyond.

Risk Factors for Incarcerated Youth: A Life Course Conceptual Framework

A risk factor refers to any characteristic, experience, behavior, or other variable that increases the likelihood of negative outcomes. Risk factors can be environmental factors, developmental factors, and "life course outcome" factors.[7] Identifying and understanding risk factors is important in various fields to help assess and predict potential challenges or problems for young people and to guide preventive measures or interventions to mitigate those risks. A scan of peer-reviewed and grey literatures (see Appendix A) has pinpointed several key risk factors that attend those who are incarcerated in juvenile justice facilities. In this section of the report, risk factors will be grouped into three categories: social environment, developmental factors, and life course outcomes.

Social Environment

Social environmental risk factors encompass the social, cultural, and institutional contexts within which individuals navigate their lives. These contexts can range from micro-environments, such as families and interpersonal relationships, to macro-environments, like city or state settings. In other words, social environmental risk factors consider the various levels of social and cultural influences that shape an individual's experiences and interactions, encompassing both immediate and larger societal factors.

Developmental Factors

Developmental risk factors pertain to the characteristics and attributes with which individuals are born and those that develop as they grow and engage with the world around them. These

[7] Chandler, Arnold L (2023). Striving and Thriving: Closing Racial Mobility Gaps Across Generations. Forward Change

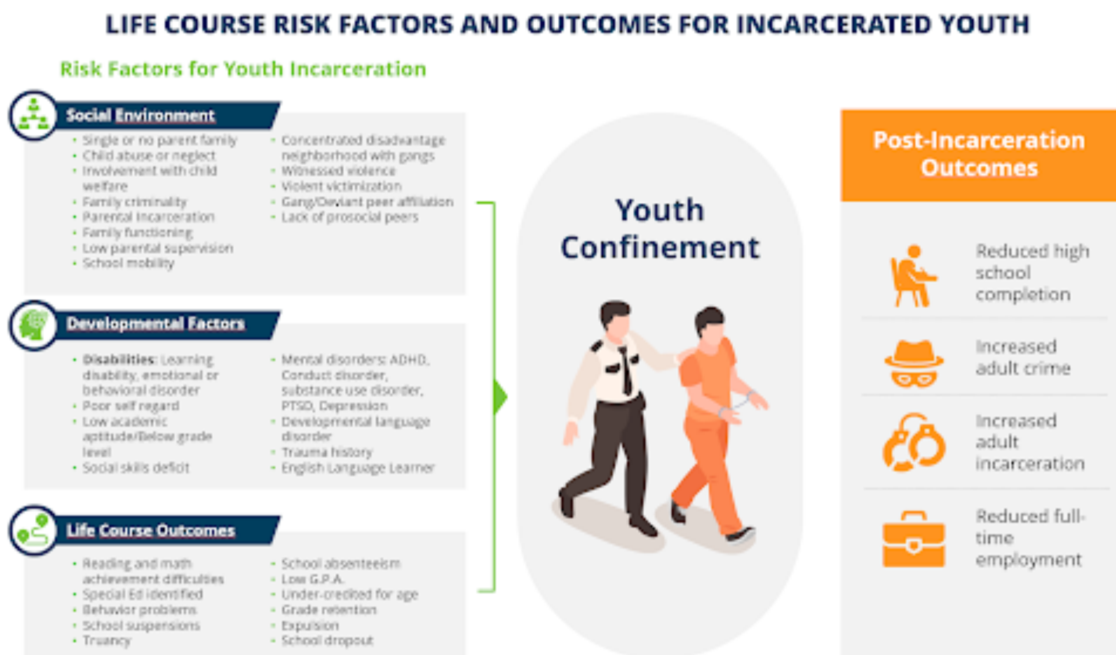
factors encompass genetic, biological, physiological, and psychological dimensions. Developmental characteristics frequently capture physical and mental health as well as how people's experiences crystallize into their abilities and orientations.

Life Course Outcomes

Life course outcomes encompass behavioral outcomes that are embedded within institutional contexts and channels and can elicit corresponding institutional responses. Examples include chronic absence from school, graduating high school, engaging in juvenile delinquency. These outcomes represent the targets that many public systems strive to promote or prevent.

Figure 4 summarizes the pre-confinement risk factors and long-term outcomes for incarcerated youth described in more detail below.

Figure 4. Life Course Risk Factors and Pathways for Incarcerated Youth



Pre-Confinement Risk Factors

Youth in secure confinement in California are overwhelmingly Black and Latino, with both groups together comprising 83% of the total population (24% Black and 58% Latino).[8] There are several common risk factors in their lives that have marked their pathways to incarceration and will continue to shape their prospects for success afterward. The risk factors listed below, in the areas of social environment, developmental factors, and life course outcomes, are some of the most important ones identified in the literature.

Social Environment

Living with only one or no parents: A sizable number of youth who are incarcerated do not live with both parents. A nationally representative study of youth in residential placement found that 56% of them were living with only one parent at the time of commitment, and 26% reported that they were not living with either parent. This compares to 28% of the overall population living with one parent and 4% living with none.[9]

Child abuse or neglect: Adolescents who have a history of delinquency are significantly more likely to have experienced childhood maltreatment by a family member such as physical or sexual abuse, physical neglect, or multiple forms of maltreatment. According to one study around one fourth (25%) of adjudicated youth, or those who have been found in a delinquency court to have committed an alleged offense, reported a history of physical and/or sexual abuse, with females being more likely to report such abuse. Studies looking exclusively at female youth involved in delinquency have found rates of physical and sexual abuse as high as 26% to 57%. Childhood abuse and neglect have been shown in nationally representative studies to significantly increase the odds of engaging in delinquent behavior. In fact, one long-term study found that early childhood abuse and neglect before the age of 11 was the strongest family-related factor predicting delinquency.[10]

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[8] California Department of Justice (2022) *2021 Juvenile Justice in California*, Table 15

[9] Daley, C. E., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2001). Educational, familial, social, and criminal profiles of male juvenile offenders. *Education Research Quarterly*,25, 12–27; Davis, L. M., Steele, J. L., Bozick, R., Williams, M. V., Turner, S., Miles, J., ... & Steinberg, P. S. (2014). *How effective is correctional education, and where do we go from here? The results of a comprehensive evaluation*. Rand Corporation; US Census Bureau (2004), "America's Families and Living Arrangements: 2003." Retrieved from https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2003/demo/families/families-living-arrangements.html on May 5th, 2023.

[10] Pyle, N., Flower, A., Williams, J., & Fall, A. M. (2020). Social risk factors of institutionalized juvenile offenders: A systematic review. *Adolescent Research Review*, 5, 173-186; Pardini, D. A., Lochman, J. E., & Frick, P. J. (2003). Callous/unemotional traits and social-cognitive processes in adjudicated youths. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 42(3), 364-371; Barnert, E. S., Perry, R., Shetgiri, R., Steers, N., Dudovitz, R., Heard-Garris, N. J., ... & Chung, P. J. (2021). Adolescent protective and risk factors for incarceration through early adulthood. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 30, 1428-1440; Mann, E. A., & Reynolds, A. J. (2006). Early intervention and juvenile delinquency prevention: Evidence from the Chicago longitudinal study. *Social Work Research*, 30(3), 153-167.; Coleman, D., & Stewart, L. M. (2010). Prevalence and impact of childhood maltreatment in incarcerated youth. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 80(3), 343–349.

Involvement with the child welfare system: Youth who have interactions with the juvenile justice system often have a history of “dual-involvement” with the child welfare system as well. For instance, in a cohort of nearly 27,000 youth from three large urban counties with a first petition to delinquency court between 2010 and 2014, around 45% to 70%, depending on the jurisdiction, had prior contact with the child welfare system.[11] Another study looking at Los Angeles County found that for almost 7,000 youth with a first juvenile petition between 2004 and 2016, nearly two-thirds (64%) had at least one prior child welfare investigation, typically when there were 5 to 8 years old. Half (48%) interacted with both systems concurrently. Rates of this “dual-involvement” were elevated for Black youth and females overall.[12]

Family functioning problems and low parental supervision: Across 14 meta-analyses of longitudinal predictors, family problems are one of the strongest predictors out of 59 for persistent criminality among juvenile youth. General family functioning is also one of the earliest predictors of juvenile delinquency.[13] Youth confined in the largest juvenile hall in Los Angeles County reported that their homes were often “chaotic” and unstructured, with parents who were perceived to be absent. This home context, they felt, contributed to their risk of juvenile offending.[14] Youth who are incarcerated often come from households where parental supervision is low and parents are not actively engaged. In fact, inadequate parental supervision is one of the most significant risk factors for youth involvement in the juvenile justice system.[15]

Family criminality and parental incarceration: In a large sample of boys, one study showed that youth criminal offending was highly concentrated in families with histories of arrests. Moreover, fathers’ histories of arrest were the strongest predictors of boys’ delinquency.[16] Using a nationally representative sample, Heard-Garris and colleagues (2019) showed that adjudicated youth were twice as likely (22%) to have had a parent who had been incarcerated

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[11] Herz, D. C., Dierkhising, C. B., Raithel, J., Schretzman, M., Guiltinan, S., Goerge, R. M., ... & Abbott, S. (2019). Dual system youth and their pathways: A comparison of incidence, characteristics and system experiences using linked administrative data. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, 48, 2432-2450.

[12] Herz, D. C., Eastman, A. L., Putnam-Hornstein, E., & McCroskey, J. (2021). Dual system youth and their pathways in Los Angeles County: a replication of the OJJDP Dual System Youth Study. Child Abuse & Neglect, 118, 105160.

[13] Basto-Pereira, M., & Farrington, D. P. (2022). Developmental predictors of offending and persistence in crime: A systematic review of meta-analyses. *Aggression and violent behavior*, 101761. (2022); Early intervention and juvenile delinquency prevention: Evidence from the Chicago longitudinal study. *Social Work Research*, 30(3), 153-167

[14] Basto-Pereira, M., & Farrington, D. P. (2022). Developmental predictors of offending and persistence in crime: A systematic review of meta-analyses. *Aggression and violent behavior*, 101761. (2022); Early intervention and juvenile delinquency prevention: Evidence from the Chicago longitudinal study. *Social Work Research*, 30(3), 153-167; Barnert, E. S., Perry, R., Azzi, V. F., Shetgiri, R., Ryan, G., Dudovitz, R., ... & Chung, P. J. (2015). Incarcerated youths’ perspectives on protective factors and risk factors for juvenile offending: A qualitative analysis. *American journal of public health*, 105(7), 1365-1371.

[15] Pyle, N., Flower, A., Williams, J., & Fall, A. M. (2020). Social risk factors of institutionalized juvenile offenders: A systematic review. Adolescent Research Review, 5, 173-186; Early intervention and juvenile delinquency prevention: Evidence from the Chicago longitudinal study. Social Work Research, 30(3), 153-167

[16] Farrington, D. P., Jolliffe, D., Loeber, R., Stouthamer-Loeber, M., & Kalb, L. M. (2001). The concentration of offenders in families, and family criminality in the prediction of boys' delinquency. *Journal of adolescence*, 24(5), 579-596.

during their childhood compared to the overall adolescent population (11%).[17] Another nationally representative study of adolescents found that having a parent with a history of incarceration roughly doubled the likelihood of youth incarceration.[18]

School mobility: Youth engaged in delinquency have often experienced school mobility, or the frequent transfer in and out of schools, which disrupts their connection with teachers and peers and harms their long-term educational outcomes.[19]

Living in concentrated disadvantage neighborhoods rife with violence and gang activity: Youth who are incarcerated overwhelmingly live in neighborhoods of concentrated disadvantage with a dense presence of gangs. These neighborhoods are marked by concentrated poverty, unemployment, low educational opportunity and attainment, violent crime, and a high number of young men on parole or probation. These communities also experience severe social and economic segregation, making them "criminogenic" environments that contribute significantly to delinquency and recidivism. Youth in Los Angeles County's central juvenile hall, for example, describe their neighborhoods as "ghettos" with "lots of gangs, shootings, and murder going around" that they believe promote delinquency and crime.[20]

Witnessing violence or violent victimization: Many youth in juvenile detention have either experienced or witnessed serious violence first-hand at some point in their lives. Studies have shown that as much as 90% of detained youth are survivors of or have been exposed to serious violence.[21]

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[17] Heard-Garris, N., Sacotte, K. A., Winkelman, T. N., Cohen, A., Ekwueme, P. O., Barnert, E., ... & Davis, M. M. (2019). Association of childhood history of parental incarceration and juvenile justice involvement with mental health in early adulthood. *JAMA network open*, 2(9), e1910465-e1910465. These figures are derived from calculations of data included in Table 1, pg. 4/11

[18] Barnert, E. S., Perry, R., Shetgiri, R., Steers, N., Dudovitz, R., Heard-Garris, N. J., ... & Chung, P. J. (2021). Adolescent protective and risk factors for incarceration through early adulthood. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 30, 1428-1440

[19] Early intervention and juvenile delinquency prevention: Evidence from the Chicago longitudinal study. *Social Work Research*, 30(3), 153-167

[20] Mennis, J., Harris, P. W., Obradovic, Z., Izenman, A. J., Grunwald, H. E., & Lockwood, B. (2011). The effect of neighborhood characteristics and spatial spillover on urban juvenile delinquency and recidivism. *The Professional Geographer*, 63(2), 174-192; Kirk, D. S. (2009). A natural experiment on residential change and recidivism: Lessons from Hurricane Katrina. *American Sociological Review*, 74(3), 484-505; Pyle, N., Flower, A., Williams, J., & Fall, A. M. (2020). Social risk factors of institutionalized juvenile offenders: A systematic review. *Adolescent Research Review*, 5, 173-186; Barnert, E. S., Perry, R., Azzi, V. F., Shetgiri, R., Ryan, G., Dudovitz, R., ... & Chung, P. J. (2015). Incarcerated youths' perspectives on protective factors and risk factors for juvenile offending: A qualitative analysis. *American journal of public health*, 105(7), 1365-1371.

[21] Abram K. M., Teplin L. A., Charles D. R., Longworth S. L., McClelland G. M., & Dulcan M. K. (2004). Posttraumatic stress disorder and trauma in youth in juvenile detention. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 61, 403–410; Shahinfar, A., Kupersmidt, J. B., & Matza, L. S. (2001). The relation between exposure to violence and social information processing among incarcerated adolescents. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 110(1), 136; Smith, L. (1998). Behavioral and emotional characteristics of children in detention. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 63-66; De Boer, S., Testé, B., & Guarnaccia, C. (2023). How Young Offenders' Perceive Their Life Courses and the Juvenile Justice System: A Systematic Review of Recent Qualitative Research. *Adolescent Research Review*, 8(2), 137-158.

Delinquent or gang peer affiliations: It is common for incarcerated youth to associate with other young people involved in delinquency or to join gangs, especially as a way to seek protection from violent victimization. Also, youth who receive low levels of parental supervision or have parents with whom they lack a strong bond may seek connection and validation from peers, including those involved in delinquency. Studies have consistently shown that having peers involved in delinquency is a strong predictor of continued criminal behavior among juvenile justice youth. The absence of positive peer relationships is also a significant predictor of continued criminal activity.[22]

Disproportionate contact with the juvenile legal system: Black and Latino youth have historically experienced disproportionate interactions with both the police and the juvenile justice system. Evidence suggests that racial disparities in arrest, adjudication, and confinement aren't solely based on the legal details of juvenile cases.[23] While the magnitude of these disparities differs across states and local jurisdictions, the influence of these "extra-legal" factors likely varies as well.[24]

Developmental Factors

Disabilities: Learning, emotional, and behavioral: Youth involved in delinquency or who are incarcerated have high rates of disabilities that impact educational outcomes and are strong predictors for delinquent behavior. According to a national survey approximately one-third of adolescents in secure juvenile confinement received educational support through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), with around 50% for those receiving supports and services for emotional-behavioral disorders (EBD) and 39% for learning disabilities. The prevalence of disabilities varied widely across juvenile residential facilities, ranging from 9% to 77%. Another national survey conducted in 2004-05 showed that nearly 40% of youth in juvenile correctional facilities were classified as having a disability. This compares to a national disability prevalence rate for all school-age youth of 9-12%. In Los

[22] Pyle, N., Flower, A., Williams, J., & Fall, A. M. (2020). Social risk factors of institutionalized juvenile offenders: A systematic review. *Adolescent Research Review*, 5, 173-186; De Boer, S., Testé, B., & Guarnaccia, C. (2023). How Young Offenders' Perceive Their Life Courses and the Juvenile Justice System: A Systematic Review of Recent Qualitative Research. *Adolescent Research Review*, 8(2), 137-158; Basto-Pereira, M., & Farrington, D. P. (2022). Developmental predictors of offending and persistence in crime: A systematic review of meta-analyses. *Aggression and violent behavior*, 101761; Edwards, W. (1996). A measurement of delinquency differences between a delinquent and nondelinquent sample: What are the implications? *Adolescence*,31, 973–989; Harding, D. J. (2010). *Living the drama: Community, conflict, and culture among inner-city boys*. University of Chicago Press.

[23] Leiber, M. J., & Fix, R. (2019). Reflections on the impact of race and ethnicity on juvenile court outcomes and efforts to enact change. American journal of criminal justice, 44, 581-608. For confinement, also see Peck, J. H., & Jennings, W. G. (2016). A critical examination of "being Black" in the juvenile justice system. Law and Human Behavior, 40(3), 219. For arrests, see Claus, R. E., Vidal, S., & Harmon, M. (2018). Racial and ethnic disparities in the police handling of juvenile arrests. Crime & Delinquency, 64(11), 1375-1393.

[24] Zane, S. N., Mears, D. P., & Welsh, B. C. (2020). How universal is disproportionate minority contact? An examination of racial and ethnic disparities in juvenile justice processing across four states. Justice Quarterly, 37(5), 817-841.

Angeles County in 2016, 30% of students involved with the justice system received special education services.[25]

Mental disorders including ADHD, conduct disorder, PTSD, and depression: Youth who are incarcerated experience a range of mental disorders, and it is quite common for many to experience multiple ones. A systematic review of research studies conducted on incarcerated youth revealed that, since 2006, the average prevalence of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) among youth in custody is 20.4%. Additionally, most incarcerated youth (62%) studied were shown to have been diagnosed with conduct disorder at some point in their lives. Rates of major depression (10% for males and 26% for females) and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (9% for males and 18% for females) were also found to be quite high. For most youth in confinement, these mental disorders co-occur. In a multi-state study of over 1,400 juvenile justice-involved youth, 60% reportedly met the criteria for three or more psychiatric disorders.[26]

Substance use disorder: Substance use disorder is quite prevalent among incarcerated youth, with one study of 1,829 detained youth reporting that approximately half had at least one substance disorder, and one in five (21%) had two or more.[27]

English Language Learner status (ELL): California has a large English Language Learner school population (25%) compared to other states, and this is reflected in the confined juvenile population as well. For Los Angeles County, fully one-third of justice-involved youth were English Language Learners.[28]

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[25] Pyle, N., Flower, A., Fall, A. M., & Williams, J. (2016). Individual-level risk factors of incarcerated youth. *Remedial and Special Education*, 37(3), 172-186; Quinn M. M., Rutherford R. B., Leone P. E., Osher D. M., Poirier J. M. (2005). Youth with disabilities in juvenile corrections: A national survey. *Exceptional Children*, 71, 339–345; Mann, E. A., & Reynolds, A. J. (2006). Early intervention and juvenile delinquency prevention: Evidence from the Chicago longitudinal study. *Social Work Research*, 30(3), 153-167; Wexler, J., Pyle, N., Flower, A., Williams, J. L., & Cole, H. (2014). A synthesis of academic interventions for incarcerated adolescents. *Review of Educational Research*, 84(1), 3-46; Fang, B. (2018) *Unhidden Figures: Examining the Characteristics of Justice-Involved Students in Los Angeles County*. Children's Defense Fund; Stizek G. A., Pittsonberger J. L., Riordan K. E., Lyter D. M., & Orlofsky G. F. (2007). *Characteristics of schools, districts, teachers, principals, and school libraries in the United States 2003–2004: School and staffing survey (NCES 2006-313 Revised).* U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office; Gagnon, J. C., Barber, B. R., Van Loan, C., & Leone, P. E. (2009). Juvenile correctional schools: Characteristics and approaches to curriculum. *Education and treatment of children*, 673-696.

[26] Beaudry, G., Yu, R., Långström, N., & Fazel, S. (2021). An updated systematic review and meta-regression analysis: Mental disorders among adolescents in juvenile detention and correctional facilities. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 60(1), 46-60; Shufelt, J. L., & Cocozza, J. J. (2006). *Youth with mental health disorders in the juvenile justice system: Results from a multi-state prevalence study* (pp. 1-6). Delmar, NY: National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice.

[27] McClelland G. M., Elkington K. S., Teplin L. A., & Abram K. M. (2004). Multiple substance use disorders in juvenile detainees. Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 43, 1215–1224

[28] Hill, Laura (2012) California's English Learner Students, Public Policy Institute of California; Fang, B. (2018) Unhidden Figures: Examining the Characteristics of Justice-Involved Students in Los Angeles County. Children's Defense Fund

Poor self-regard: Research studies have demonstrated that youth subjected to incarceration often have low self-regard, perceiving themselves as incapable "losers," and having a diminished sense of self-efficacy.[29]

Life Course Outcomes Prior to Confinement

Below grade level academic achievement: According to a national survey of over 7,000 youth in custody, nearly half (48 percent) reported achieving below their grade level, a rate almost double that for the general population (28%). Furthermore, studies of detained and committed youth have shown that their math and reading scores range from 3 to 6 years below their nominal grade level.[30]

School suspensions and expulsions: A nationally representative survey of incarcerated youth found that nearly 60 percent were suspended from school in the year before they entered custody. Evidence from a national longitudinal study suggests that school suspensions have criminogenic effects in that they contribute to subsequent youth offending through their erosion of attachment to school.[31]

Truancy/Absenteeism: Youth in confinement have relatively elevated levels of truancy and school absenteeism prior to their detention or commitment. A national survey of youth in custody found that 21 percent were not enrolled in school prior to their confinement, a figure four times the rate for their peers in the general population (5%). A study comparing all youth in correctional facilities in Florida to non-incarcerated students in that state found that they were absent 14% of the school year on average compared to 8% for non-incarcerated students.[32]

Grade retention: Rates of grade retention, or repeating a grade in school, have been shown in a national survey to be about 2.5 times higher for youth in confinement (26%) compared to youth in the general population (11%). Similarly, youth in correctional facilities in Florida were

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[29] Beyer M. (2006). Fifty delinquents in juvenile and adult court. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 76, 202–214; O'Brien N., Langhinrichsen-Rohling J., Shelley-Tremblay J. (2007). Reading problems, attentional deficits, and current mental health status in adjudicated adolescent males. *The Journal of Correctional Education*, 58, 293–315

[30] Sedlak A. J., Bruce C. (2010). *Youth's characteristics and backgrounds: Findings from the Survey of youth in residential placement*. Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; Grigorenko, E. L., Macomber, D., Hart, L., Naples, A., Chapman, J., Geib, C. F., ... & Wagner, R. (2015). Academic achievement among juvenile detainees. Journal of learning disabilities, 48(4), 359-368; Krezmien M., Mulcahy C., Leone P. (2008). Detained and committed youth: Examining differences in achievement, mental health needs, and special education status. *Education & Treatment of Children*, 31, 445–464.

[31] Sedlak A. J., Bruce C. (2010). *Youth's characteristics and backgrounds: Findings from the Survey of youth in residential placement.* Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; Mowen, T. J., Brent, J. J., & Boman IV, J. H. (2020). The effect of school discipline on offending across time. *Justice Quarterly*, 37(4), 739-760; Hemez, P., Brent, J. J., & Mowen, T. J. (2020). Exploring the school-to-prison pipeline: How school suspensions influence incarceration during young adulthood. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 18(3), 235-255.

[32] Sedlak, A. J., & Bruce, C. (2010). Youth's Characteristics and Backgrounds: Findings from the Survey of Youth in Residential Placement. Juvenile Justice Bulletin. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; Wang, X., Blomberg, T. G., & Li, S. D. (2005). Comparison of the educational deficiencies of delinquent and nondelinquent students. Evaluation review, 29(4), 291-312.

almost twice as likely to have repeated a grade (25.4%) compared to non-incarcerated students (14.5%).[33]

Under-credited for age: Given their histories of suspensions and absenteeism, many youth in confinement have accumulated relatively few high school credits for their age.[34]

School dropout: National data for 2009 showed that 40% of the incarcerated youth population between the ages of 16 and 24 dropped out of high school. National longitudinal studies, furthermore, show that high school dropout is the primary pathway to adult prison, especially for black males. In California, for example, 90% of black male high school dropouts have gone to prison in their lifetime.[35]

Life Course Outcomes Post-Confinement

Juvenile incarceration can impede the attainment of age-appropriate developmental milestones that are important to psychological and social functioning in adulthood. As young people grow older, they are expected to achieve various normative milestones and rites of passage, such as completing secondary and postsecondary education, gaining financial independence through full-time employment, moving out of their parents' home, establishing long-term intimate relationships, and ultimately, attaining emotional and psychological maturity and stability. Unfortunately, incarceration can disrupt connections to vital social institutions, such as education and employment, at a crucial time that can hinder a youth's successful transition to adulthood.[36]

This section of the report scrutinizes the long-term effects of juvenile incarceration on key life course outcomes such as educational attainment, recidivism, subsequent adult incarceration, and adult employment. Studies in this section are limited to those that use causal research designs, or those that can distinguish between whether incarceration causes subsequent life outcomes versus merely being correlated with them. The studies cited below show

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[33] Sedlak, A. J., & Bruce, C. (2010). *Youth's Characteristics and Backgrounds: Findings from the Survey of Youth in Residential Placement. Juvenile Justice Bulletin*. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; Lugaila, T. A. (2003). A Child's Day: 2000 (Selected Indicators of Child Well-Being). Household Economic Studies. *Currect Population Reports*; Wang, X., Blomberg, T. G., & Li, S. D. (2005). Comparison of the educational deficiencies of delinquent and nondelinquent students. *Evaluation review*, 29(4), 291-312.

[34] Cavendish, W. (2014). Academic attainment during commitment and postrelease education–related outcomes of juvenile justice-involved youth with and without disabilities. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 22(1), 41-52.

[35] Burrus, J., & Roberts, R. D. (2012). Dropping out of high school: Prevalence, risk factors, and remediation strategies. R & D Connections, 18(2), 1-9; Raphael, S. (2007). Early incarceration spells and the transition to adulthood. The price of independence: The economics of early adulthood, 278-305.

[36] De Boer, S., Testé, B., & Guarnaccia, C. (2022). How Young Offenders' Perceive Their Life Courses and the Juvenile Justice System: A Systematic Review of Recent Qualitative Research. Adolescent Research Review, 1-22; Gilman, A. B., Hill, K. G., & Hawkins, J. D. (2015). When is a youth's debt to society paid? Examining the long-term consequences of juvenile incarceration for adult functioning. Journal of developmental and life-course criminology, 1, 33-47; Quach, K., Cerda-Jara, M., Deverux, R., & Smith, J. (2022). Prison, College, and the Labor Market: A Critical Analysis by Formerly Incarcerated and Justice-Impacted Students. The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 701(1), 78-97.

that incarcerating youth substantially reduces their future educational attainment, increases recidivism and incarceration in adulthood, and diminishes their long-term employment prospects.

Reduced high school graduation: As previously noted, a considerable proportion (40%) of youth who experience incarceration between the ages of 16 and 24 are high school dropouts, in stark contrast to only 8.1% of the non-incarcerated population of that age.[37] Emerging evidence indicates that juvenile incarceration may itself be a cause school dropout. Hjalmarsson (2008) used nationally representative longitudinal data to estimate the causal effect of juvenile incarceration on high school graduation. He found that incarcerating juveniles decreased their probability of graduating high school by 25 percentage points. Interestingly, the study also found that the length of incarceration did not appear to influence the likelihood of graduation. This suggests that the lasting stigma of incarceration may be a major contributor to the overall impact of incarceration on the risk of dropout. In another study conducted over a 10-year period in Illinois, Aizer and Doyle (2015) analyzed the incarceration histories and adult outcomes of more than 35,000 juveniles who experienced incarceration. To assess the impact of incarceration, the study authors compared the outcomes of youth who had been incarcerated to youth who had committed the same offenses and had similar risk profiles but happened to be assigned to judges who decided *not* to incarcerate them. Incarceration led to a 13-percentage point reduction in high school graduation rates (from 43% to 30%), which the authors interpreted as a causal effect of incarceration itself.[38]

Increased recidivism and adult crime: Evidence points to incarceration as being a cause of juvenile recidivism and negative outcomes rather than a means of preventing them. A study of all youth released from the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice between July 2006 and July 2011 found that social interactions with peers from unstable homes and with high levels of aggression while incarcerated caused an increase in the propensity of released youth to recidivate.[39] Summarizing a growing literature on the potential causal effects of incarceration on recidivism, Loeffler and Nagin (2022) note that instances in which adult or juvenile incarceration reduce recidivism mostly occur in settings where rehabilitative programming is emphasized. In contrast, in settings where rehabilitative programming was not emphasized, incarceration was more likely to be criminogenic.[40]

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[37] Burrus, J., & Roberts, R. D. (2012). Dropping out of high school: Prevalence, risk factors, and remediation strategies. *R & D Connections*, 18(2), 1-9; Chapman, C., Laird, J., Ifill, N., & KewalRamani, A. (2011). *Trends in High School Dropout and Completion Rates in the United States: 1972-2009. Compendium Report*. NCES 2012-006. National Center for Education Statistics.

38 Hjalmarsson, R. (2008). Criminal justice involvement and high school completion. Journal of Urban Economics, 63(2), 613-630; Aizer, A., & Doyle Jr, J. J. (2015). Juvenile incarceration, human capital, and future crime: Evidence from randomly assigned judges. The Quarterly Journal of Economics, 130(2), 759-803.

[39] The study used the quasi-random overlap in shared residence among youth in Florida's 160 correctional facilities as the basis for assigning a causal interpretation to this relationship. See Stevenson, M. (2017). Breaking bad: Mechanisms of social influence and the path to criminality in juvenile jails. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 99(5), 824-838.

[40] Loeffler, C. E., & Nagin, D. S. (2022). The impact of incarceration on recidivism. Annual Review of Criminology, 5, 133-152.

Increased adult incarceration: The same study that found a reduction in high school graduation for incarcerated youth in Illinois (Aizer and Doyle, 2015) also found that incarceration as a juvenile increased the chances of later incarceration as an adult by 22 percentage points (from 6.7% to 28.7%). Another study by Eren & Mocan (2021) employed data on all 7,396 juveniles who were incarcerated in the state of Louisiana between 1996 and 2004 and found that youth incarceration caused an increase in the likelihood of being convicted of a crime as an adult.[41]

Reduced adult employment: According to one longitudinal study, only 1 in 5 (20%) formerly detained males and 1 in 3 (33%) formerly detained females were working full-time or in school by age 30. This was in contrast to 77% of the general population at that same age. In a nationally representative study, Apel & Sweeten (2010) compared youth who have been incarcerated to a set of closely matched youth who had not been incarcerated but shared several similar background characteristics. They found that being incarcerated led to an 11 percentage-point reduction in the probability of being formally employed as an adult.[42]

Higher Education Can Be a Turning Point for Incarcerated Youth

Youth who become incarcerated often find themselves on familiar paths of neglect and marginalization within our country's educational system. Without significant intervention, these paths can lead to continued involvement in the criminal legal system, prolonged unemployment, and a sense of hopelessness. Fortunately, higher education has the potential to create a transformative shift in the lives of these youth. With mounting evidence supporting its effectiveness, education in correctional settings—particularly higher education—has been shown to decrease the likelihood of reoffending and increase positive long-term educational and employment outcomes. It serves as a vital component of the rehabilitation process.[43]

Reduced Recidivism: A study of 972 incarcerated individuals in Ohio who were paroled or released from prison in the early 1990s found that education in a correctional setting, specifically college education, reduced recidivism rates by 62 percent in comparison to those who didn't enroll in some form of education while incarcerated. In fact, college education was the only type of correctional education (compared to obtaining a high school diploma, GED, or vocational credential) that significantly decreased recidivism rates. One limitation of this study

[41] Aizer, A., & Doyle Jr, J. J. (2015). Juvenile incarceration, human capital, and future crime: Evidence from randomly assigned judges. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 130(2), 759-803; Eren, O., & Mocan, N. (2021). Juvenile punishment, high school graduation, and adult crime: Evidence from idiosyncratic judge harshness. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 103(1), 34-47.

[42] Abram, K. M., Azores-Gococo, N. M., Emanuel, K. M., Aaby, D. A., Welty, L. J., Hershfield, J. A., ... & Teplin, L. A. (2017). Sex and racial/ethnic differences in positive outcomes in delinquent youth after detention: A 12-year longitudinal study. *JAMA pediatrics*, 171(2), 123-132; Apel, R., & Sweeten, G. (2010). The impact of incarceration on employment during the transition to adulthood. *Social problems*, 57(3), 448-479.

[43] Jäggi, L., & Kliewer, W. (2020). Reentry of incarcerated juveniles: Correctional education as a turning point across juvenile and adult facilities. Criminal Justice and Behavior, 47(11), 1348-1370; Wexler, J., Pyle, N., Flower, A., Williams, J. L., & Cole, H. (2014). A synthesis of academic interventions for incarcerated adolescents. Review of Educational Research, 84(1), 3-46.

is that it couldn't account for selection effects that might bias results. A selection bias might occur if those who are less likely to recidivate in the first place are those most likely to enroll in college while in confinement.[44] However, some studies that are able to address the risk of selection bias have helped to paint a picture of the bigger potential of correctional education to reduce recidivism. A systematic review of over 37 years of correctional education research (1980-2017) has found that when limited to studies with the highest quality research designs, incarcerated people who participated in correctional education were 28% less likely to recidivate compared to those incarcerated individuals who did not participate in correctional education. This reality has led one researcher to argue that recidivism serves less as a marker of inherent criminal risk and more as a proxy measure for access to opportunity.[45]

Increased Schooling and Hours Worked: A recent study of 1,354 adolescents followed for a year after they were adjudicated delinquent found that those who had a stronger attachment to school while in confinement—indicated by a bond with a teacher, their attitude toward school, and the time they spent on homework—were less likely to engage in delinquency and more likely to re-enroll in school or work for a year after release.[46] Another study of 4,066 youth for 3 years after they were released from juvenile correctional facilities found that the more credits youth earned while in confinement, the higher their likelihood of returning to school after release.[47] Finally, a study by Duwe and Clark (2014) found a causal relationship between prison-based education and recidivism and employment after release. Their analysis of data for 9,394 incarcerated people released from Minnesota prisons from 2007 to 2008 indicated that a postsecondary degree led people who were formerly incarcerated to work significantly more hours after release than those who did not complete a postsecondary degree while incarcerated.[48]

[44] Batiuk, M. E., Lahm, K. F., McKeever, M., Wilcox, N., & Wilcox, P. (2005). Disentangling the effects of correctional education: Are current policies misguided? An event history analysis. *Criminal justice*, 5(1), 55-74.

[45] Bozick, R., Steele, J., Davis, L., & Turner, S. (2018). Does providing inmates with education improve postrelease outcomes? A meta-analysis of correctional education programs in the United States. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 14, 389-428; Denney, M. G., & Tynes, R. (2021). The effects of college in prison and policy implications. *Justice Quarterly*, 38(7), 1542-1566.

[46] Jäggi, L., & Kliewer, W. (2020). Reentry of incarcerated juveniles: Correctional education as a turning point across juvenile and adult facilities. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 47(11), 1348-1370; Jäggi, L., Kliewer, W., & Serpell, Z. (2020). Schooling while incarcerated as a turning point for serious juvenile and young adult offenders. *Journal of Adolescence*, 78, 9-23.

[47] Cavendish, W. (2014). Academic attainment during commitment and postrelease education–related outcomes of juvenile justice-involved youth with and without disabilities. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 22(1), 41-52.

[48] Duwe, G., & Clark, V. (2014). The effects of prison-based educational programming on recidivism and employment. *The Prison Journal*, 94(4), 454-478.

Section II: Proven and Promising Interventions, Key Insights and Best Practices from the Research Literature

Summarizing findings from a scan and analysis of the research literature, this section of the report provides insight into:

- what the overall literature on educational interventions for youth in confinement can tell us about which interventions are effective
- the characteristics of what can be characterized as "proven" or "promising" educational interventions; and
- the principles behind effective educational programming for youth who have been incarcerated, as derived from empirical studies or documented best practice recommendations.

An Overview of the State of Relevant Research

Existing research on educational interventions for youth who have been incarcerated has important gaps and weaknesses. However, a small set of proven and promising interventions offer several potential insights for policy decision-makers and practitioners.

There are several research challenges to effectively studying incarcerated youth.

When conducting intervention research in juvenile correctional facilities, researchers contend with numerous challenges. These include: the high mobility rates of justice-involved youth, program duration that is dictated by varying lengths of stay, the difficulty of scheduling academic services amid other competing services, and a historical emphasis on disciplinary measures within facilities to the neglect of educational programming. All of these have been cited as obstacles that can impact participation rates, study attrition, study duration, and overall research design.[49]

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[49] Wexler, J., et al. (2014); Krezmien, M. P., & Mulcahy, C. A. (2008). Literacy and delinquency: Current status of reading interventions with detained and incarcerated youth. Reading & Writing Quarterly, 24, 219-238; Mulcahy, C. A., Krezmien, M. P., Leone, P. L., Houchins, D. E., & Baltodano, (2008). Lessons learned: Barriers and solutions for conducting reading investigations in juvenile corrections settings. Reading and Writing Quarterly, 24, 239; Lipsey, M. W. (2009). The primary factors that characterize effective interventions with juvenile offenders: A meta-analytic overview. Victims and offenders, 4(2), 124-147; Snyder, H. N., & Sickmund, M. (1999). Juvenile offenders and victims: 1999 national report. Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; Williams, J. L., Wexler, J., Roberts, G., & Carpenter, C. (2011). Intensive reading instruction in juvenile correctional settings. Exceptionality, 19, 238-251.

There is a shortage of rigorous studies of education interventions for individuals in correctional facilities.

Given the challenges cited above, high-quality, peer-reviewed research on educational interventions for incarcerated youth and adults is noticeably lacking. Aside from a shortage of such studies, there are often flaws in the design and methodology of those that do exist. Often, these studies fail to randomly assign participants to groups that receive the intervention (treatment groups) and groups that do not (control groups). Furthermore, most of these studies don't include a large enough number of participants to produce results that are statistically significant. These issues make it challenging to determine, among other things, which interventions might be effective, who benefits from them, why they work, and how specific contextual conditions can affect their potential impact.[50]

Few studies provide sufficient detail on educational interventions to help guide policy decision-makers and practitioners.

Most studies evaluating educational interventions provide extremely limited detail on program characteristics, making it difficult to identify effective approaches and best practices. For instance, many studies fail to provide sufficient detail on program costs, program activities, program dosage and duration, or optimal group size for instruction.[51]

Regarding dosage and duration: dosage reflects the length and frequency of individual sessions, while duration specifies total sessions delivered over a given period of time. Existing reviews of educational intervention studies published over the last five decades reveal a striking lack of detail regarding these key program features. For most interventions, the total instructional hours, daily or weekly hours, and time devoted to supplemental activities or independent study are not well captured. Given the vast variation in intervention dosages and durations that are reported, the ideal parameters necessary for program effectiveness generally cannot be extrapolated from current research literature. Furthermore, there's a conspicuous absence of studies that empirically examine these variations to ascertain the minimum requirements for achieving effective results.[52]

How students should be grouped for instruction also represents a significant gap in the literature. The task of grouping students for instruction within correctional facilities can be challenging to educators because of their varying skill levels and transitions in and out of the facility. Youth of the same age can differ in reading and math ability by multiple grade levels. Moreover, when youth enter and exit facilities frequently it not only impacts the progress and

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[50] Wexler, J., Pyle, N., Flower, A., Williams, J. L., & Cole, H. (2014). A synthesis of academic interventions for incarcerated adolescents. *Review of Educational Research, 84*(1), 3–46.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Wexler et al., 2014; Bozick, R., Steele, J., Davis, L., & Turner, S. (2018). Does providing inmates with education improve postrelease outcomes? A meta-analysis of correctional education programs in the United States. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, *14*, 389-428.

achievement of individual students, but also produces instability in the maintenance of established instructional groups. The research literature also provides little guidance on optimal instructional group size. Further complicating instructional grouping, many facilities group youth based on their residential units within the physical facility, rather than matching them based on individual learning needs.[53]

Most educational intervention studies focus exclusively on reducing recidivism.

Educational intervention studies for youth and adults who are incarcerated generally concentrate on recidivism reduction as the main desired outcome. Study results, even within this narrow topic area, lack coherence, as the term recidivism has been defined to include reoffending, rearrest, reconviction, reincarceration, technical parole violations, and/or failure to complete parole. Studies predominantly use reincarceration as their primary outcome measure, giving little attention to other significant outcome measures, such as high school graduation, college enrollment, or employment.[54]

There are only a handful of empirically identified factors that promote college participation and success for youth in confinement.

The most comprehensive survey of adult correctional education programs to date was conducted in 2004 and found that most of the 46 responding prisons partnered with local community colleges (68%) to offer college programs, typically through in-person instruction (91% offered on-site classes). Distance education courses via video or satellite were available in approximately half (45%) of prison systems across the country. Online courses were rarely offered. Even with this level of access, however, the vast majority of eligible individuals in these facilities did not enroll in postsecondary educational programs.[55]

An analysis of the *2004 Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities*—which interviewed approximately 18,000 prisoners—identified several factors that increase the likelihood of prisoners participating in postsecondary programs while incarcerated. These factors include the highest grade attended before incarceration, visits from children, pre-incarceration income, length of incarceration, participation in prison assistance groups, and employment counseling. The researchers suggest that correctional institutions

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[53] Wexler et al., 2014; Krezmien, M. P., & Mulcahy, C. A. (2008). Literacy and delinquency: Current status of reading interventions with detained and incarcerated youth. Reading & Writing Quarterly, 24, 219-238

[54] Ibid.; Bozick, R., Steele, J., Davis, L., & Turner, S. (2018). Does providing inmates with education improve postrelease outcomes? A meta-analysis of correctional education programs in the United States. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, *14*, 389-428.

[55] Erisman, W., & Contardo, J. B. (2005). Learning to Reduce Recidivism: A 50-State Analysis of Postsecondary Correctional Education Policy. Institute for Higher Education Policy.

should proactively encourage incarcerated individuals to enroll in college programs through such methods as distributing flyers, hosting information sessions, and spreading awareness via word of mouth. Moreover, offering "good time" credits for participation in informational sessions could serve as an incentive for enrollment.[56]

A large study, involving 591 students aged 18 to 25 enrolled in college programs across 33 prisons in five states, surfaced critical factors predicting enhanced motivation and success in correctional college programs. Students who received a traditional high school diploma (versus a GED) earned more college credits in their programs and possessed greater aspirations to complete their degrees. “Institutional climate"—a metric gauging the quality of relationships between staff and incarcerated people—was also strongly associated with aspirations to complete college. Lastly, robust support from course instructors and peers predicted stronger achievement motives, including elevated educational expectations and greater confidence in academic ability.[57]

Proven Interventions

The following section delves into three rigorously evaluated programs—Read 180, Avon Park Youth Academy/Street Smart (APYA/SS), and the Bard Prison Initiative. These programs are characterized as "proven interventions" because they have undergone rigorous evaluation through high-quality randomized controlled trials or quasi-experimental study designs and have demonstrated improvements in educational, employment, or recidivism outcomes. For policy decision makers and practitioners, we provide detailed descriptions of these programs. However, for those seeking a succinct overview of each intervention and its impact, the "Description" and "Findings" sections for each intervention offer a concise summary.

Read 180

Description: The Read 180 program is an academic skills intervention for 4th through 12th graders based on an instructional model, software and materials designed and developed by Scholastic, Inc. It includes a reading curriculum and separate components that are computer-assisted, teacher-led, independent study, and small group based. The program includes a computer-supported assessment and placement application that allows teachers to group students of similar skill levels and to monitor their daily progress online. Computerized instructional materials also allow them to plan for differentiated instruction. Instructional

[56] Rose, K., & Rose, C. (2014). Enrolling in college while in prison: Factors that promote male and female prisoners to participate. *Journal of Correctional Education (1974-), 65*(2), 20-39.

[57] Meyer, S. J. (2011). Factors affecting student success in postsecondary academic correctional education programs. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 132-164.

materials to which teachers have access include textbooks, trade books, computer software, and supplemental worksheets.[58]

Evidence across two evaluation studies has shown a statistically significant difference for students' reading comprehension and language abilities attributable to Read 180 program participation.

Study 1: The first study (Loadman et al, 2011) and the largest to date was a randomized controlled trial of 1,245 students across eight correctional facilities in Ohio from 2006 to 2011.[59] In this study, participating students received 90 minutes of the Read 180 program daily, compared to the control group which received the same amount of instruction but using the default language arts curriculum for the local counties. The treatment sample was 70% Black, roughly one quarter white, and 96% male. Half (50%) had disability status and nearly half (45%) were classified as special education. Students mostly ranged in age from 14-22 with the majority between the ages of 18 and 22. About half (55%) of students had attained 9th or 10th grade academic status and a quarter (25%) had graduated high school.

The following program implementation details applied in this study: The classrooms that housed the Read 180 class sessions were each outfitted with five computer stations and headphones, a reading area complete with couches, and a selection of books and tables arranged either individually or in clusters, depending on classroom size. Classes began with a 20-minute whole-group session, which then transitioned into three smaller, rotating groups for computer work, independent reading, and small-group interaction, each lasting 20 minutes. A 10-minute wrap-up session is also prescribed by the model but was rarely implemented. Group work was only occasionally conducted as it was often not feasible due to the diverse range of reading levels—from 4th to 12th grade—within a typical class. This complexity was further compounded by the presence of students with disabilities.

Each Read 180 classroom was supervised by a teacher certified in English/Language Arts and an aide who was also certified. Each teacher also had access to a literacy coach. However, literacy coach positions were vacant in three of the 8 facilities for between 3 months and a year. One facility also had a vacant teacher position for 3 months.

Study 2: A second randomized controlled trial (Houchins et al, 2018) conducted in a long-term juvenile correctional facility in a southeastern state randomized 16 teachers (8 to treatment and 8 to a control group) and 464 male students ages 12-18 (225 to treatment and 239 to a control group). The typical residential stay in the facility was 6 to 9 months. Students in the treatment group received 110 minutes of daily literacy instruction using Read 180, five days per week. Students in the control group received the standard teacher-led instruction and language arts curriculum provided at other schools in the county where the study took place.

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[58] Davis, L. M., Steele, J. L., Bozick, R., Williams, M. V., Turner, S., Miles, J., ... & Steinberg, P. S. (2014). *How effective is correctional education, and where do we go from here? The results of a comprehensive evaluation*. Rand Corporation.

[59] Loadman, W. E., Moore, R. J., Ren, W., Zhu, J., Zhao, J., & Lomax, R. (2011). Striving Readers Year 5 Project Evaluation Report: Ohio. An Addendum to the Year 4 Report. Ohio State University.

The study sample of all-male students was about half (48%) Black, 40% white, and 10% Latino with a mean age of 16. Over 40% had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), and a majority (58%) took psychotropic medications.[60]

As in study 1, Read 180 sessions began with a 20-minute whole-group session, during which the teacher presented direct instruction to all students, covering academic vocabulary, reading strategies, grammar, and writing skills. A motivational video served as an engaging backdrop. After the first 20 minutes, the class was split into three groups, based on ability, each completing a 20-minute rotation in: (a) small-group instruction, (b) computer-based instruction, and (c) independent reading. The teacher tailored the small-group instruction to student ability levels and needs. Meanwhile, all students utilized the Read 180 computer-based instructional program to refine their individual literacy skills. The class concluded with a 10-minute whole-group wrap-up, where the teacher summarized the day's lesson content.

Findings: At the end of the 20-week intervention period in the first study (Loadman et al, 2011), students who were receiving Read 180 daily instruction showed gains that were .21 of a standard deviation higher on the reading portion of California Achievement Test than the control group. At a one-year follow-up for students still enrolled at one of the eight correctional institutions, the gains were .26 of a standard deviation.[61] For the second study (Houchins et al, 2018), students saw significant gains in comprehension and language skills, but no gains in decoding, oral reading fluency, or spelling.

Avon Park Youth Academy and Street Smart (APYA/SS)

Description: Avon Park Youth Academy (APYA) and Street Smart (SS) are complementary components of a program in Florida developed to improve the educational, employment, life, and community skill outcomes for incarcerated youth. Operated by the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, APYA is an intensive and individualized program that uses competency-based instruction tailored to each student focused on vocational education. It also includes services for special needs students. The program is administered in a facility located on a former Air Force base in Avon Park, Florida and features a campus-like environment with youth residing in 12 fully furnished duplexes where they are entrusted with the upkeep of their homes, yards, and the overall campus. SS is a reentry program that is a complement to APYA and offers job placement, employment, community support, and mentorship services to APYA participants after they are released to the community. The program had an average cost of around $25,000 per participant when it was evaluated in 2003.[62]

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[60] Houchins, D. E., Gagnon, J. C., Lane, H. B., Lambert, R. G., & McCray, E. D. (2018). The efficacy of a literacy intervention for incarcerated adolescents. *Residential Treatment for Children & Youth*, 35(1), 60-91.

[61] Loadman, W. E., Moore, R. J., Ren, W., Zhu, J., Zhao, J., & Lomax, R. (2011). *Striving Readers Year 5 Project Evaluation Report: Ohio. An Addendum to the Year 4 Report*. Ohio State University.

[62] Davis, L. M., Steele, J. L., Bozick, R., Williams, M. V., Turner, S., Miles, J., ... & Steinberg, P. S. (2014). How effective is correctional education, and where do we go from here? The results of a comprehensive evaluation. Rand Corporation.

Study 1: The National Council on Crime and Delinquency evaluated the program between 2002 and 2003 (National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 2009) using a randomized controlled trial and a sample of 714 youth who were incarcerated. The evaluation examined three different outcomes including rates of diploma completion, employment, and rearrests.[63]

Eligibility for the study was restricted to youth aged 16 to 18. The study sample was 44% white, 41% Black, and 14% Latino. Nearly half (46%) of participants were assessed as chemically dependent, 41% were not attending school or had severe educational problems at the time of their arrest or referral, 44% had only completed school up to the 8th grade, nearly a third (32%) had dropped out of school, 40% had a special education need, and almost two thirds (63%) had reading skill levels at or below the sixth-grade level. The average length of stay for APYA youth was 10 months, with 86% reaching the age of 17 years or older at release. The average length of participation in SS was around 11 months, and 90% of participants were over the age of 18 at program completion.

APYA

A central feature of the APYA program is the vocational training provided by the Home Builders Institute (HBI). HBI provides training in various trades, enabling youth to apply learned skills through supervised community service, on-the-job training, and paid employment. For APYA participants, roughly 80% of the day revolves around learning vocational trades and employability skills, such as problem-solving and social skills. Trade programs offered by HBI include plumbing, electrical work, carpentry, building and apartment maintenance, and landscaping. To attain certification in a trade, a youth is required to complete 870 hours of work in that trade. The program ensures adequate opportunities for youth to accumulate the necessary work hours for certification. The approach to programming adopted by APYA is an incentive model whereby youth are promoted through up to five phases based on meeting goals for each phase. A comprehensive assessment of each youth participant's educational, vocational, and psychological needs is used to develop treatment plans that are case managed by a multidisciplinary team focused on addressing each youth's education, job training, and reentry needs. Educational programming beyond vocational training is focused on attaining a high school diploma or equivalent while youth are in residential stay at APYA.

The SS Reentry Program

SS transition specialists, based at the APYA campus, serve as a bridge connecting APYA correctional staff with SS community specialists who support youth after they are released from custody. From the moment youth arrive at APYA, transition specialists are involved in intake procedures and advising and monitoring case planning for youth that include periodic

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[63] National Council on Crime and Delinquency (2009). In Search of Evidence-Based Practice in Juvenile Corrections: An Evaluation of Florida's Avon Park Youth Academy and Street Smart Program, Madison, Wisc.: National Council on Crime and Delinquency

needs assessments and the development of reentry plans. Reentry plans contain specific goals in the areas of family, employment, education, housing, independent living skills, physical and behavioral health issues, and legal issues pertaining to release. SS community specialists offer a range of transition services, including job placement, employment training, community adjustment support, mentoring, and other supports. They foster and maintain relationships with the youths' families, employers, juvenile justice staff, local Workforce Investment Boards, School-to-Work partnerships, community service organizations, and local volunteers. Incentives play a significant role in the reentry phase, taking the form of gift certificates for dining and shopping, movie passes, and gifts like electronics. HBI and SS transition specialists aid the youth in securing employment before their discharge from APYA. Additional support in the form of transitional assistance funds, loans, tool kits, and scholarships are provided to facilitate each youth's return to the community. SS places a significant focus on positive use of leisure time, an area strongly associated with recidivism. Community specialists also foster positive working relations with probation officers to help align and support each other's roles.

Findings: The results of the intervention demonstrate the effectiveness of a personalized approach to improve diploma completion and employment rates. Over an average incarceration length of 10 months, diploma completion—defined as earning a high school diploma, GED, or special diploma for students with special needs—was significantly higher for the treatment group (44.1%) compared to the control (26.9%). The evaluation also found a difference in the average employment rate one-year post release, with a 72.4 percent employment rate among the treatment group and only 64.4 percent among the control. The study, however, found no statistically significant difference in recidivism rates.[64]

Bard Prison Initiative (BPI)

Description: The Bard Prison Initiative (BPI) was launched in 2001 by Bard College as a liberal arts program that offers college courses to students who are incarcerated in the state of New York. BPI offers full-time A.A. and B.A. degree programs in six correctional facilities across the state. Students take 12-16 credits per semester, with classes meeting for two hours once or twice a week. They are also afforded access to tutors and additional academic support outside of class time. Classes are available during weekday mornings, afternoons, and evenings.[65]

Studies: To understand the effect of the BPI on measured outcomes, Bard College's multi-stage admissions process was utilized to account for selection bias. As the authors report, this was possible through relying on knowledge of the admissions process, testable assumptions, and controlling for several variables known to predict educational attainment and recidivism. The study sample of 683 was restricted to those students who applied to participate in the Initiative.

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[64] Davis, L. M., Steele, J. L., Bozick, R., Williams, M. V., Turner, S., Miles, J., ... & Steinberg, P. S. (2014). *How effective is correctional education, and where do we go from here? The results of a comprehensive evaluation*. Rand Corporation.

[65] Denney, M. G., & Tynes, R. (2021). The effects of college in prison and policy implications. *Justice Quarterly*, 38(7), 1542-1566.

Findings: Study findings showed that participation in BPI was associated with a 39 percent reduction in recidivism. Subgroup analysis showed that reductions in recidivism were even larger for Black and Latino BPI participants. Moreover, the higher "intensity of study" reflected in attaining a bachelor's as compared to an associate's degree was associated with greater reductions in recidivism.[66]

Promising Interventions

Two programs reviewed below—Corrective Reading and Re-Integration of Offenders–Youth (RIO-Y)—are considered in this report to be "promising". They are characterized as such because they have shown positive impacts on education or employment outcomes but have only been evaluated with studies using relatively weak research designs.

Corrective Reading

Description*:* Corrective Reading is a commercially available, teacher-led, program designed for students who read below their grade level. The curriculum has two instructional modules that can be taught separately or together. One of the modules focuses on basic literacy skills such as identification and decoding, while the other focuses on reading comprehension.[67] Though it is common for educational approaches in correctional facilities to rely on student-driven work, Corrective Reading focuses on direct instruction, featuring a quickly paced, scripted presentation that includes purposefully selected exercises and illustrations. It can be administered in small groups of about four to five learners, or in a larger classroom setting. It is designed to be delivered in sessions lasting 45 minutes, four to five times a week. For effective implementation of the program, the publisher offers about seven hours of staff training primarily focusing on how to provide direct instruction and make optimal use of the program's resources.[68]

Studies and Findings: The use of Corrective Reading in correctional facilities has shown promise in improving reading skills, specifically in basic areas like word identification and decoding. However, extant studies have not been large enough to produce statistically significant results, so generalizations on the program's effectiveness are unwarranted at this time.[69] Considering there are few reading programs for juveniles who are incarcerated, Corrective Reading may be an option, especially for improving lower-level reading skills.

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[66] Ibid

[67] McGraw Hill Education, n.d..

[68] What Works Clearinghouse, U.S. Dept of Education. Retrieved on 5/27/23 from https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/EvidenceSnapshot/120

[69] Davis, L. M., Steele, J. L., Bozick, R., Williams, M. V., Turner, S., Miles, J., ... & Steinberg, P. S. (2014). How effective is correctional education, and where do we go from here? The results of a comprehensive evaluation. Rand Corporation.

Re-Integration of Offenders–Youth (RIO-Y)

Description: Re-Integration of Offenders–Youth (RIO-Y), is a vocational education program operated by the Texas Youth Commission that offers career development courses in adult correctional facilities. It seeks to mitigate life course outcomes post-release that have historically led to reduced rates of full-time employment for formerly incarcerated juveniles.[70]

Studies: One study, with a sample of 1,502 youth who were incarcerated ranging in age from 18-21, investigated the impact of RIO-Y. Of the sample, 582 participants received the month-long program while 920 individuals in the control group received no career development instruction. As an observational study, the researchers adjusted for 17 demographic and risk-related factors to ascertain potential program impacts.[71]

Findings: The results showed that the odds of employment were 39% higher for the RIO-Y treatment group than the comparison group one year after release. The study found no significant impact on recidivism rates.[72] This study supports the importance of vocational education/CTE in correctional settings, particularly for GED completion and post-release employment. However, as an observational study and not a randomized controlled trial, the intervention can only be considered promising.[73]

Key Takeaways from Proven and Promising Intervention Evaluation Studies

Quality education improves an array of outcomes: Proven intervention programs were shown to improve several key outcomes for incarcerated youth including academic achievement, high school completion, and increased employment. One proven intervention program (BPI) reduced recidivism; APYA-SS and Read 180, notably, had no impacts on this outcome.

Intensive and individualized instruction and substantial reentry support can significantly improve outcomes: APYA-SS provided compelling evidence that an intensive and personalized approach to educational and vocational instruction, matched with reentry supports that last almost a year on average, can have substantial positive effects on high school completion and employment after release.

Computer-assisted instruction helps to individualize instruction and improve reading outcomes: The use of computer-assisted instruction in Read 180 allowed teachers to differentiate instruction and closely monitor student progress, a capability not usually afforded with traditional classroom instruction. Responding effectively to the widely varying academic skill levels and needs of students in juvenile facilities is a major challenge faced by educators.

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[70] Ibid

[71] Roos, L. (2006). The Effects of Career Development on Employment and Recidivism Among Juvenile Offenders. Universal-Publishers.

[72] Ibid

[73] Davis, L. M., Steele, J. L., Bozick, R., Williams, M. V., Turner, S., Miles, J., ... & Steinberg, P. S. (2014). *How effective is correctional education, and where do we go from here? The results of a comprehensive evaluation*. Rand Corporation.

Daily dose of instruction is better: Read 180, which significantly improved reading skills, featured a daily dose of reading instruction.

Obtaining a bachelor's reduces recidivism more than other credentials: BPI demonstrated that higher levels of educational attainment—obtaining a bachelor's compared to an associate's degree—is associated with larger reductions in recidivism.

No evidence on interventions that can boost enrollment and completion of postsecondary credentials for confined youth: Given the purpose of this report, a major limitation of the existing literature on proven or promising interventions is their lack of evidence for successfully boosting college enrollment or the completion of postsecondary credentials.

Promising Practices

For the purposes of this report, the term "promising practices" denotes principles, practical recommendations, lessons learned, and advice reported in the peer-reviewed or grey literatures by researchers or practitioners. Promising practice suggestions often originate from extensive hands-on experience, yet their effectiveness in improving educational outcomes for incarcerated youth and young adults has not been rigorously evaluated.

One of the most comprehensive collections of promising practices for educating youth in juvenile justice settings is found in a pivotal 2014 report by the U.S. Departments of Education (DOE) and Justice (DOJ). This report, titled *Guiding Principles for Providing High-Quality Education in Juvenile Justice Secure Care Settings* (referred to henceforth as *Guiding Principles*), aimed to establish a framework for implementing high-quality educational practices for confined youth and to facilitate their reintegration into school following their release.[74]

The five guiding principles included in the DOE/DOJ report were as follows:

1. **A safe, healthy facility-wide climate** that prioritizes education, provides the conditions for learning, and encourages the necessary behavioral and social support services that address the individual needs of all youths, including those with disabilities and English learners.
2. **Necessary funding** to support educational opportunities for all youths within long-term secure care facilities, including those with disabilities and English learners, comparable to opportunities for peers who are not system-involved.
3. **Recruitment, employment, and retention of qualified education staff** with skills relevant in juvenile justice settings who can positively impact long-term student

[74] US Departments of Education and Justice. (2014). Guiding principles for providing high-quality education in juvenile justice secure care settings.

outcomes through demonstrated abilities to create and sustain effective teaching and learning environments.

4. **Rigorous and relevant curricula** aligned with state academic and career and technical education standards that utilize instructional methods, tools, materials, and practices that promote college- and career-readiness.
5. **Smooth reentry into communities** through statutes, memoranda of understanding, and practices, that create formal processes and procedures to ensure successful navigation across child-serving systems.

The *Guiding Principles* report prompted numerous subsequent studies, aimed at summarizing empirical evidence backing the report's principles and augmenting its recommendations with practical findings from existing literature. A 2022 study (Gagnon et al) serves as a notable example of such investigations. The researchers carried out a systematic review of studies published from 2015 through 2020, focusing on education and related services for youth under 18 in detention or commitment facilities. The goal was to find articles that would validate, bolster, or expand upon the principles in the *Guiding Principles* report. The study pinpointed 36 applicable articles that touched on nearly all of the principles. However, it's noteworthy that they discovered no published research addressing Principle 2, which pertains to funding needed to support the education of youth in juvenile confinement.[75]

This section of the report is designed to further this line of research, summarizing the key recommendations from *Guiding Principles* and subsequent studies. It particularly focuses on promising practices related to providing high-quality *higher education* programming and services for incarcerated youth. Though a robust and seminal piece in the realm of juvenile justice and education, *Guiding Principles* and subsequent studies don't explore practices related to higher education programming for incarcerated youth. The following sections aim to bridge this gap by summarizing research that pertains specifically to higher education for youth in confinement.

Social Climate and Supports Conducive to Effective Education

The first principle in the *Guiding Principles* report specified the elements required to develop a juvenile facility climate and supports that are conducive to improving educational outcomes. As detailed in the report, principle 1 calls for **"A safe, healthy, facility-wide climate that prioritizes education, provides the conditions for learning, and encourages the necessary**

[75] Gagnon, J. C., Mason-Williams, L., Griller Clark, H., LaBelle, B., Mathur, S. R., & Leone, P. E. (2022). Providing high-quality education in juvenile corrections: Next steps. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry.

behavioral and social support services that address the individual needs of all youths, including those with disabilities and English learners.”[76]

The social climate within a confinement setting plays a pivotal role in shaping how youth adapt to their circumstances, either encouraging or hindering positive outcomes. According to Mathys (2017), the social climate consists of three key dimensions: relationships between youth and staff, peer relationships, and facility rules and practices.[77]

Daily youth-staff interactions should ideally encompass emotional and developmental supports that echo warm parental behaviors. Staff members, acting as caregivers, should strive to foster positive interactions, demonstrate genuine interest in the youth, exhibit empathy, and encourage constructive coping strategies. Their roles often tread the delicate line between care and control.

Peer relationships within confinement facilities also significantly impact the social climate. The concentration of youth with histories of delinquency can foster the type of negative peer influence that has been shown to contribute to recidivism.[78] However, effective institutional practices can disrupt or alleviate these effects. Such strategies may include promoting positive interaction by reinforcing prosocial behaviors and attitudes and implementing activities that encourage peer modeling, counseling, or instruction.

The third dimension—facility rules and practices—forms the foundation for social climate. Consistent routines, along with rules that are clear, coherent, and fair, inspire compliance among youth and foster an environment of stability and security.[79]

The *Guiding Principles* report and subsequent studies provide several important strategies for establishing a safe and healthy facility climate accompanied by key supports. These include the following, which are listed here and then further explored below:

1. Employ good screening and service matching practices.
2. Establish consistent routines and positive reinforcement practices.
3. Use trauma-informed approaches.
4. Use multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS).
5. Offer high-quality and accessible higher education programming.

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[76] US Departments of Education and Justice. (2014). Guiding principles for providing high-quality education in juvenile justice secure care settings.

[77] Mathys, C. (2017). Effective components of interventions in juvenile justice facilities: How to take care of delinquent youths?. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 73, 319-327.

[78] See section I of the report

[79] Mathys, C. (2017). Effective components of interventions in juvenile justice facilities: How to take care of delinquent youths?. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 73, 319-327.

6. Recruit students and use incentives to encourage participation in higher education programming.

Employ good screening and service matching practices.

Upon entering juvenile facilities, it's critical that youth undergo immediate screening and assessment, with ongoing evaluations to monitor progress and emerging issues. This comprehensive approach is fundamental to promoting educational success for young people during confinement.[80] Screenings should encompass a wide array of areas, from reading and math skills to potential mental disorders - such as ADHD, conduct disorder, substance use disorder, and externalizing disorders. Moreover, exposure to trauma, symptoms of PTSD, callous-unemotional traits, and commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) should be assessed. A complete evaluation should also incorporate a review of family history information. To ensure effectiveness, screening assessment tools should be validated with justice-involved populations of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and assessors should avoid requiring youth to recount traumatic experiences in multiple interviews.[81]

Screening provides the basis for effectively matching interventions to youth. The Risk-Need-Responsivity model suggests that to determine the suitability of a particular program for a specific youth, factors such as their individual risk, needs, and likely responsiveness to particular interventions should be evaluated. Risk and needs assessments can help steer decisions about programs likely to diminish a youth's propensity towards delinquency, as well as the appropriate intensity of treatment. The 'responsivity' component of this model underscores the importance of delivering intervention strategies in a manner that acknowledges a youth's unique learning styles and abilities. It further considers personal characteristics and circumstances that may influence their response to an intervention. In essence, this model advocates for an individualized approach, tailored to each youth's unique profile and situation.[82] Research underscores that if implemented effectively, strategies that appropriately match youth with high-quality services—tailored to their needs and administered in suitable dosage and duration—can reduce recidivism.[83]

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[80] Erisman, W., & Contardo, J. B. (2005). Learning to Reduce Recidivism: A 50-State Analysis of Postsecondary Correctional Education Policy. Institute for Higher Education Policy.

[81] Branson, C. E., Baetz, C. L., Horwitz, S. M., & Hoagwood, K. E. (2017). Trauma-informed juvenile justice systems: A systematic review of definitions and core components. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy,* 9(6), 635; Wibbelink, C. J., Hoeve, M., Stams, G. J. J., & Oort, F. J. (2017). A meta-analysis of the association between mental disorders and juvenile recidivism. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 33, 78-90.

[82] Andrews, D. A., & Bonta, J. (2010). Rehabilitating criminal justice policy and practice. Psychology, Public Policy, and Law, 16(1), 39; Muhlhausen, D. B., & Hurwitz, H. J. (2019). First Step Act. Federal Sentencing Reporter, 32(1), 56-62; Mathys, C. (2017). Effective components of interventions in juvenile justice facilities: How to take care of delinquent youths?. Children and Youth Services Review, 73, 319-327.

[83] Baglivio, M. T., Wolff, K. T., Howell, J. C., Jackowski, K., & Greenwald, M. A. (2018). The search for the holy grail: Criminogenic needs matching, intervention dosage, and subsequent recidivism among serious juvenile offenders in residential placement. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 55, 46-57.

Establish consistent routines and positive reinforcement practices.

Guiding Principles and other studies have put forth key practices for establishing consistent routines and creating positive reinforcement for better educational outcomes. In particular, *Guiding Principles* calls for full-day education for youth in juvenile confinement similar to their non-incarcerated peers, school days that are free of the interruptions that frequently occur in juvenile facilities, students delivered to classrooms by facility staff in a consistent and timely manner, and the prohibition of withholding education as a form of punishment. Other studies also suggest it is important to provide recognition of achievement and key interim milestones on students' educational journeys.[84]

Use trauma-informed approaches.

Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) refers to the infusion of trauma awareness and recognition across an organization or service system. However, the lack of a universally recognized definition for trauma-informed care in the juvenile justice field has been identified by numerous researchers as a hindrance to developing effective trauma-responsive systems. To address this, a group of researchers (Branson et al, 2017) conducted a systematic literature review aimed at identifying the most frequently mentioned core elements, as well as specific interventions or policies tied to trauma-informed care in juvenile correctional settings.[85] Their comprehensive exploration formed the foundation for a series of recommendations, including the following:

- Ensure that evidence-based, trauma-specific treatments are readily accessible and widely available to youth and their families.
- Offer a continuum of trauma-informed interventions, from brief to more intensive, long-term treatments.
- Deliver programs designed to teach youth self-regulation skills.
- Ensure youth and their families have access to social support from individuals who share similar backgrounds.
- Offer educational resources and service referrals to specifically address and manage trauma experienced by parents or caregivers.
- Train staff to understand and recognize trauma in youth and their families.
- Mitigate traumatic stress reactions among front-line staff, and train staff in strategies to prevent their own traumatic stress.

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[84] US Departments of Education and Justice. (2014). Guiding principles for providing high-quality education in juvenile justice secure care settings; Erisman, W., & Contardo, J. B. (2005). Learning to Reduce Recidivism: A 50-State Analysis of Postsecondary Correctional Education Policy. Institute for Higher Education Policy.

[85] Branson, C. E., Baetz, C. L., Horwitz, S. M., & Hoagwood, K. E. (2017). Trauma-informed juvenile justice systems: A systematic review of definitions and core components. Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy, 9(6), 635.

A study conducted in two large, secure juvenile detention facilities evaluated the impact of educating both staff and youth about trauma, its effects, and appropriate responses. Staff underwent a training program known as Think Trauma, which employed a train-the-trainer approach. This curriculum equipped staff with crucial knowledge about trauma, its repercussions on youth, and its influence on staff and organizational function. Concurrently, the youth participated in a program named Skills Training in Affect and Interpersonal Regulation (STAIR), comprising three sessions centered around trauma education, emotional recognition, mechanisms for coping with challenging feelings, and effective communication. Over a nearly five-year evaluation period, the implementation of these two programs correlated with a decline in violent incidents between youth in the long-term detention facility, even though only 16% of youth participated in the STAIR program. However, in the short-term detention facility, where an even lower (only 9%) share of youth were involved in the STAIR program, there was no discernible impact on the trend of violence between youth. Given that the second facility was a short-term facility, the authors surmised that these youth experienced a relatively limited exposure to the trauma-informed practices compared to the youth in long-term detention, helping to explain the null findings.[86]

Use multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS).

Guiding Principles included a recommendation for adapting the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework for—and further developing it within the context of—juvenile facilities.[87] MTSS is a comprehensive framework used in education to provide academic, behavioral, and social-emotional support to all students in a school. It involves progressive levels of support tied to the level of student needs and issues. There are typically three tiers in MTSS:

- **Tier 1:** The universal tier involves providing support to all students in the school. It includes high-quality classroom instruction and proactive school-wide behavior expectations.
- **Tier 2:** Entails additional targeted support for students who are not making adequate progress in Tier 1 alone. It may include small group interventions or more targeted instruction in areas where students struggle.
- **Tier 3:** Includes intensive, individualized support for students who continue to show difficulty after Tier 2. This could include individual tutoring or specialized interventions.

MTSS emphasizes data-based decision making, meaning student performance data is consistently collected and analyzed to adjust supports as necessary. The goal is to proactively identify and address academic and behavioral needs to help all students succeed. This tiered

[86] Baetz, C. L., Surko, M., Moaveni, M., McNair, F., Bart, A., Workman, S., ... & Horwitz, S. M. (2021). Impact of a trauma-informed intervention for youth and staff on rates of violence in juvenile detention settings. Journal of interpersonal violence, 36(17-18),

[87] US Departments of Education and Justice. (2014). Guiding principles for providing high-quality education in juvenile justice secure care settings

approach is also compatible with the Risk-Need-Responsivity model previously described, which is also data-driven and individually tailored.

One such MTSS in the field of juvenile incarceration, known as "facility-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports" (FW-PBIS), is one of few tiered support approaches developed and oriented to addressing climate issues in secure juvenile facilities. In the FW-PBIS framework, each moment of every day is seen as an opportunity for intervention. It's an approach where every staff member—regardless of discipline, role, or shift—applies tiered practices tailored to the unique needs of each youth. Simultaneously, they collect data to measure the effectiveness and integrity of these practices. The practices executed within the FW-PBIS framework are multifaceted, encompassing domains such as education, mental and physical health, social and emotional health, substance-abuse treatment, and self-care.[88]

Offer high-quality and accessible higher education programming.

Borden and Meyer (2012) propose several guidelines for setting up high-quality college programming in correctional facilities. Their suggestions emphasize the provision of cost-effective, high-quality, engaging, and interactive postsecondary general education core courses for students. They propose that course rotations be pragmatically designed for achievable attainment within the constraints of prison settings. Necessary books and materials should be supplied promptly, and college instructors should provide timely feedback on student coursework. College partners, moreover, should streamline the transcript request process and respond promptly to such requests.[89]

Recruit students and use incentives to encourage participation in higher education programming.

Practitioners and researchers propose that juvenile facilities proactively recruit youth receiving a high school diploma or its equivalent to get started on a college pathway. Strategies such as distributing flyers, hosting informational sessions, and leveraging word-of-mouth awareness building should be employed to boost involvement in college-oriented programs. Moreover, offering 'good time' credits as incentives for attending informational sessions could further encourage potential participants.[90]

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[88] Jolivette, K., Sprague, J. R., Swoszowski, N. C., McIntosh, K., & Sanders, S. (2020). FW-PBIS framework implementation and facility climate perspectives through the lens of youth in secure juvenile facilities: A pilot study. Remedial and Special Education, 41(2), 99-110.

[89] Borden, C., Richardson, P., & Meyer, S. J. (2012). Establishing successful postsecondary academic programs; a practical guide. Journal of Correctional Education (1974-), 63(2), 6-26.

[90] Quach, K., Cerda-Jara, M., Deverux, R., & Smith, J. (2022). Prison, College, and the Labor Market: A Critical Analysis by Formerly Incarcerated and Justice-Impacted Students. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 701(1), 78-97.

Qualified instructors with Sufficient Investment in Professional Development

The third principle in the *Guiding Principles* report described the need for qualified instructors capable of meeting the needs of incarcerated youth. Specifically, it called for the **"recruitment, employment, and retention of qualified education staff with skills relevant in juvenile justice settings who can positively impact long-term student outcomes through demonstrated abilities to create and sustain effective teaching and learning environments."**[91]

While the need for qualified teachers in juvenile justice facilities is evident, the research literature does not provide substantial guidance regarding what makes for a "qualified" teacher in a juvenile confinement context. Many teachers who end up choosing to work in these facilities often have a desire to work with this population, personal connections to the system, or religious or moral motivations.[92] Teacher certification is an important standard for assessing qualifications. Given the many unique challenges associated with teaching in a juvenile correctional facility, however, it is just one of many requirements and perhaps not always the most essential.

Studies of instructors teaching in juvenile facilities have chronicled a litany of challenges they may confront, any one of which may undermine effectiveness, morale, and ultimately retention. Teaching within correctional facilities can present personal safety risks and require significant emotional labor. Teachers often shoulder the responsibility of providing instruction in multiple subjects including math, English, science, and history. They work with students who may have limited formal education and academic skills significantly below their nominal grade level, and their students frequently enter and exit classrooms as they enter placement or are released. Resources for their classrooms are typically scant, with a notable shortage of books and school supplies and significant technology limitations. Correctional staff, focused primarily on maintaining control and ensuring rule compliance, may make it difficult to create engaging and participatory classroom environments. This zealous focus on rule compliance can occasionally lead to teacher harassment and a contemptuous view of educators who are perceived as overly empathetic toward the youth. Non-academic tasks such as keeping close watch of classroom supplies, closely tracking students' whereabouts, and even negotiating gang-related issues, can also consume a considerable portion of a teacher's time. Regular interruptions, including visits from correctional staff, police, and probation officers, often disrupt and negatively impact classroom instruction.[93]

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[91] US Departments of Education and Justice. (2014). Guiding principles for providing high-quality education in juvenile justice secure care settings.

[92] Houchins, D. E., Shippen, M. E., Schwab, J. R., & Ansely, B. (2017). Why do juvenile justice teachers enter the profession?. Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 25(4), 211-219.

[93] Flores, J., & Barahona-Lopez, K. (2020). "I am in a constant struggle:" The challenges of providing instruction to incarcerated youth in southern California. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 76, 102192; Shippen, M. E., Houchins, D. E., & Lockwood, S. (2014). Juvenile correctional professional development: From conceptualization to evaluation. *Journal of Correctional Education* (1974-), 65(1), 68-87.

Given the reality of teaching in juvenile facilities, professional development is of vital importance for ensuring that qualified instructors enter juvenile correctional classrooms and remain. However, an extensive review of the juvenile correctional educational literature shows that teachers often lack sufficient pre-service training or professional development to meet the unique developmental needs of incarcerated adolescents.[94]

Teachers in juvenile facilities receive the same training as their counterparts in traditional public schools and are thus not guided in the unique academic and behavioral supports needed for instructing incarcerated students. Furthermore, they have typically not been exposed to the unique contextual and cultural nuances of the juvenile correctional environment.[95] To help address these challenges, several recommendations in *Guiding Principles* and elsewhere call for greater professional development for juvenile facility instructors.

The following professional development themes have been suggested in the literature:

- **Individualized Instruction:** Supporting teacher's ability to provide personalized instruction that entails catering to the individual learning needs of each student. This may involve the use of computer-assisted instruction and systematic assessment as reflected in the design of Read 180.
- **Classroom Management:** implementing effective classroom behavior management strategies, especially incorporating trauma-informed approaches.
- **Cultural Responsiveness:** culturally responsive teaching techniques to foster a more inclusive and engaging learning environment.
- **Instruction for Transient Populations:** strategies that accommodate the frequent entry and exit of incarcerated students from classrooms due to placement or release.
- **Creative, Comprehensive Curriculum Implementation:** creative approaches to implementing comprehensive curricula to the best extent possible in secure settings.
- **Multi-course Instruction:** approaches to instructing students engaged in multiple courses within a single class period.
- **Positive Learning Conditions:** strategies for creating and maintaining positive conditions for learning in secure care facility classrooms.

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[94] Development Services Group, Inc. (2019). Education for youth under formal supervision of the juvenile justice system: Literature review. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; Wexler, J., Pyle, N., Flower, A., Williams, J. L., & Cole, H. (2014). A synthesis of academic interventions for incarcerated adolescents. Review of Educational Research, 84(1), 3–46; Christian, D. (2022, March 28). Education Behind Bars: A Review of Educational Services in Juvenile Correctional Facilities. College of Safety & Emergency Services Academic Journal; Murphy, K. M. (2018). Should I stay or should I go? Teachers' commitment to their work in juvenile corrections schools. Journal of Correctional Education (1974-), 69(1), 4-29.

[95] Gagnon, J. C., Houchins, D. E., & Murphy, K. M. (2012). Current juvenile corrections professional development practices and future directions. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 35(4), 333-344.

Furthermore, professional development should be strategically woven throughout the school year based on assessed needs of the teachers. It should not only involve classroom coaching but also empowering educators to make decisions concerning the content and forms of their professional development. In order to tailor and maximize teacher professional growth and support retention, teacher input should be valued and incorporated into the choice and design of these developmental opportunities.[96]

College instructors providing in-person or online instruction in facilities are likely to face similar challenges to secondary-level teachers and therefore require comparable investments in professional development. While there is little research on the experiences of college instructors in correctional settings specifically,[97] what does exist echoes the more widely documented experiences of secondary-level instructors.

College instructors teaching in correctional settings have reported several challenges:[98]

- **Culture Shock:** Instructors often experience a significant adjustment when transitioning to teach in correctional environments.
- **Training Deficit:** Most educators report a lack of training on correctional system procedures and policies.
- **Bureaucratic Hurdles:** Instructors frequently face difficulties due to institutional rules and processes, particularly when physically entering the prison to teach.
- **Technology Limitations:** There is often a dearth of up-to-date and accessible technology, including internet and multimedia capabilities, hindering modern pedagogical approaches and those that allow educators to efficiently serve students with diverse needs.
- **Student Technology and Library Resources:** Students often lack access to essential learning resources, such as the internet, comprehensive libraries, and computers.
- **Resource Scarcity:** Educators face difficulty accessing essential supplies, impeding optimal lesson delivery and student participation.
- **Limited Student Interaction:** Instructors lack opportunities for one-on-one meetings or traditional office hours with students.
- **Institutional Disruptions:** Regular disruptions due to institutional lockdowns or other security issues often lead to cancelled classes.

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[96] Gagnon, J. C. et al (2012). Shippen, M. E., Houchins, D. E., & Lockwood, S. (2014). Juvenile correctional professional development: From conceptualization to evaluation. *Journal of Correctional Education* (1974-), 65(1), 68-87; US Departments of Education and Justice. (2014). *Guiding principles for providing high-quality education in juvenile justice secure care settings*.

[97] Weaver, A., Rousseau, D., & Napior, A. J. (2020). Learning From Teachers. Journal of Correctional Education (1974-), 71(1), 18-56.

[98] Ibid

- **Staffing Issues:** Insufficient numbers of available correctional officers can delay escorts for students to classrooms, consequently postponing class start times and reducing class duration.

Given the similar complexities involved in teaching in correctional facilities for college instructors, they will likely require an array of professional development to equip them with the orientation, strategies and workarounds to deliver effective instruction in correctional institutions.

Quality Curriculum and Effective Instructional Practices

The fourth principle in the *Guiding Principles* report described the need for a high-quality curriculum and effective instructional practices in juvenile correctional facilities. Specifically, it calls for **"rigorous and relevant curricula aligned with state academic and career and technical education standards that utilize instructional methods, tools, materials, and practices that promote college- and career-readiness."**[99]

Research indicates that juvenile facilities provide academic and vocational education that is inferior to that provided in traditional schools, particularly for math and science.[100] Curricula are often not aligned to college and career-readiness standards, and self-paced, independent "packet" work is common across subjects and electives.[101] Many schools also use outdated teaching strategies like "drill and practice" as well as online "credit recovery" programs without requisite teacher support.[102] An additional concern is that juvenile facilities typically arrange instructional groups based on students' residential unit rather than their individual learning needs.[103]

The existing body of intervention research offers limited guidance on effective instruction in reading, mathematics, and science beyond the evidence provided above for Read 180. Literature reviews exploring evidence-based instructional practices in juvenile confinement settings revealed a lack of studies concerning effective instructional strategies for

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[99] Duncan, A., & Holder, E. H. (2014). Guiding principles for providing high-quality education in juvenile justice secure care settings. US Department of Education and US Department of Justice.

[100] Korman, H. T. N., Marchitello, M., & Brand, A. (2019). Patterns and trends in educational opportunity for students in juvenile justice schools: Updates and new insights. Bellwether Education Partners; Agus-Kleinman, J., Salomon, N., Weber, J., & Council of State Governments Justice Ctr. (2019). On track: How well are states preparing youth in the juvenile justice system for employment. Council of State Governments, Justice Center.

[101] Gagnon, J. C., Mason-Williams, L., Griller Clark, H., LaBelle, B., Mathur, S. R., & Leone, P. E. (2022). Providing high-quality education in juvenile corrections: Next steps. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry.

[102] Duncan, A., & Holder, E. H. (2014). Guiding principles for providing high-quality education in juvenile justice secure care settings. US Department of Education and US Department of Justice; Wexler, J., Pyle, N., Flower, A., Williams, J. L., & Cole, H. (2014). A synthesis of academic interventions for incarcerated adolescents. Review of Educational Research, 84(1), 3–46.

[103] Wexler, J. et al (2014)

mathematics or STEM subjects.[104] Nevertheless, researchers have highlighted the possible advantages of differentiated, peer-mediated, and computer-assisted instruction for incarcerated students. These approaches might prove beneficial, considering the unique challenges inherent in providing instruction within juvenile confinement settings.[105]

- **Differentiated instruction** is a practice where teachers proactively modify and adjust instruction methods, content, assignments, and assessments to cater to the diverse learning needs and preferences of individual students in the classroom. The goal is to ensure that all students, regardless of their learning style, abilities, or background, can understand and master the academic material.
- **Peer-mediated instruction** is an educational strategy where students are actively involved in teaching and learning from each other. This approach fosters a collaborative learning environment and can improve academic achievement, social interactions, and behavior among students.
- **Computer-assisted instruction** refers to the use of computer technology to deliver educational content or to enhance the teaching and learning process. It can encompass a wide range of tools and applications, from interactive software programs to online educational resources and platforms. Read 180 (described above) is a computer-assisted instructional program that supports differentiated instruction through assessment and content tailored to ability.

Given the diverse abilities of youth in juvenile correctional facilities, differentiated, peer-mediated, and computer-assisted instructional approaches could be particularly beneficial. These strategies allow for necessary instructional customization and can harness the abilities of more advanced students to assist their peers.

An important instructional faultline in juvenile correctional education relates to the relative benefits of in-person vs. online instruction. Researchers suggest that both should be made available in confinement settings. While online instruction may not emulate all of the benefits of in-person instruction, it can support consistent and standardized programming as well as continuity of educational coursework when young people are released from confinement.[106] A recent pilot study assessed the benefits of various approaches for delivering online courses in

[104] Gagnon, J. C., & Barber, B. R. (2014). Instructional practice guide for teaching reading and mathematics in juvenile correctional schools. *Journal of Correctional Education* (1974-), 65(3), 5-23; Gagnon, J. C., Mason-Williams, L., Griller Clark, H., LaBelle, B., Mathur, S. R., & Leone, P. E. (2022). Providing high-quality education in juvenile corrections: Next steps. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*.

[105] Duncan, A., & Holder, E. H. (2014). *Guiding principles for providing high-quality education in juvenile justice secure care settings*. US Department of Education and US Department of Justice; Wexler, J., Pyle, N., Flower, A., Williams, J. L., & Cole, H. (2014). A synthesis of academic interventions for incarcerated adolescents. *Review of Educational Research*, 84(1), 3-46.

[106] Borden, C., Richardson, P., & Meyer, S. J. (2012). Establishing successful postsecondary academic programs; a practical guide. *Journal of Correctional Education* (1974-), 63(2), 6-26.

correctional settings.[107] They found that use of laptops was superior to tablets due to the functionality they afforded and the need for software that could restrict visits to non-course related websites. Active participation on a weekly discussion board by the facilitator, responding to the main posts of all students to pose questions and expand the analysis, and weekly facilitated synchronous discussions were all identified as potential best practices. Timely grades and feedback as well as the use of physical textbooks were also considered essential. Online textbooks can't be taken back to residential units and read between classes. Lastly, the course incorporated an advising model that involved two face-to-face sessions with the instructor focused on identifying career goals and reflections about the course.[108]

Support for Successful Reentry into the Community

The fifth principle in the *Guiding Principles* report described the need for procedures and supports to help youth successfully navigate reentry into the community. Specifically, it calls for **"formal processes and procedures—through statutes, memoranda of understanding, and practices—that ensure successful navigation across child- serving systems and smooth reentry into communities."**[109]

Reentry into communities following a period of confinement can be a complex and challenging process for youth, particularly when it comes to returning to school.[110] Nevertheless, evidence underscores the significance of reintegration into educational settings or securing employment as pivotal factors in reducing recidivism and mitigating the long-term adverse effects linked with juvenile confinement.[111] Regrettably, there is a lack of rigorous research to effectively guide policy or practice concerning the reentry of juveniles or young adults.[112] Despite this, the peer-reviewed research literature does present a wealth of practice-based recommendations, predominantly focusing on issues related to high school reentry for these youth.[113]

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[107] Dennis, M., & Halbert, J. D. (2022). Effective Online Course Delivery in Correctional Settings: A Pilot. *Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice*, 22(8), 89-97.

[108] Ibid.

[109] Duncan, A., & Holder, E. H. (2014). Guiding principles for providing high-quality education in juvenile justice secure care settings. US Department of Education and US Department of Justice.

[110] Keeley J. H. (2006). Will adjudicated youth return to school after residential placement? The results of a predictive validity study. *The Journal of Correctional Education*, 57, 65–87.

[111] Blomberg, T. G., Bales, W. D., Mann, K., Piquero, A. R., & Berk, R. A. (2011). Incarceration, education and transition from delinquency. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 39(4), 355-365.

[112] Gagnon, J. C., Mason-Williams, L., Griller Clark, H., LaBelle, B., Mathur, S. R., & Leone, P. E. (2022). Providing high-quality education in juvenile corrections: Next steps. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*; Kubek, J. B., Tindall-Biggins, C., Reed, K., Carr, L. E., & Fenning, P. A. (2020). A systematic literature review of school reentry practices among youth impacted by juvenile justice. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 110, 104773

[113] Kubek, J. B., Tindall-Biggins, C., Reed, K., Carr, L. E., & Fenning, P. A. (2020). A systematic literature review of school reentry practices among youth impacted by juvenile justice. *Children and Youth Services*

Most prominent among these are the creation of reentry teams that manage a "system of care" for reentering youth. *Guiding Principles* describes the need to create a reentry team for each youth that includes a reentry coordinator who coordinates with services and separate agencies before and after release, a facility education staff person who oversees educational services provided in the facility and coordinates student academic records, a facility mental health or substance use treatment provider if appropriate, a community liaison who is knowledgeable of programs and services in the community, a transition specialist who bridges the facility school and educational institutions in the community, and lastly a vocational rehabilitation counselor who can help with postsecondary education or employment for youth with qualifying disabilities.[114] Kubek et al (2017) and Guiding Principles describe the elements of this "system of care" that reentry teams should provide and manage.[115] These include:

- Planning for release that begins as soon as youth enter juvenile facilities and that results in individualized pre-release plans developed in collaboration with youth and their families.
- Adopting a "function-oriented rather than agency-oriented approach" where services and supports are individualized and "person-centered."
- Coordinating and guiding the provision of multiple wraparound supports, including those related to physical and mental health, education, socio-emotional development, housing, employment, and recreation.
- Conducting pre-release planning that begins well before the youth exits the facility.
- Ensuring youth records are transferred to educational agencies
- Quick response to any issues that emerge during reentry; and
- Identifying caring adults and mentors who can be called upon for support, mentorship, and advocacy.

For youth who are reentering and attending postsecondary institutions, several additional supports have been suggested that include:[116]

- Mentoring support, and, where possible, connection with a "credible mentor" or ambassador who can help the youth successfully navigate the educational transition.

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114 Duncan, A., & Holder, E. H. (2014). *Guiding principles for providing high-quality education in juvenile justice secure care settings*. US Department of Education and US Department of Justice.

115 Kubek, J. B., Tindall-Biggins, C., Reed, K., Carr, L. E., & Fenning, P. A. (2020). A systematic literature review of school reentry practices among youth impacted by juvenile justice. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 110, 104773.

116 Quach, K., Cerda-Jara, M., Deverux, R., & Smith, J. (2022). Prison, College, and the Labor Market: A Critical Analysis by Formerly Incarcerated and Justice-Impacted Students. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 701(1), 78-97; Davis, L. M., & Tolbert, M. (2019). *Evaluation of North Carolina's pathways from prison to postsecondary education program*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

- Housing support, especially that which involves additional co-located wraparound support services like admissions and financial aid counseling, tutoring, employment support, and legal services.
- Navigation support to help link students to reentry services on campus and elsewhere.

Section III: Building Higher Education Pathways for Secure Treatment Youth in California: A Call to Action

This section of the report combines the findings gathered from the literature reviews summarized in Section II with insights garnered from 65 interviews with stakeholders connected to the juvenile justice system in California. It puts forth detailed recommendations that comprise a comprehensive call to action to build effective higher education pathways for secure treatment youth in the state.

The stakeholders interviewed for this report included those who have experienced juvenile confinement and have pursued or completed higher education pathways, instructors in juvenile detention facilities, faculty at colleges and universities providing instruction to incarcerated students, staff and administrators at County Offices of Education, managers of higher education programs targeting youth in juvenile justice facilities, youth justice advocates, researchers, chief probation officers and their staff, staff at district attorneys' offices, staff at public defenders' offices, juvenile facility behavioral health specialists, and administrators at the California Division of Juvenile Justice.

Detailed educational and demographic data on all young people in Secure Treatment Youth Facilities (SYTF) in California are not currently available. However, field interviews and data from the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) suggest that the majority of these youth are over 18, with the average age for DJJ youth being 19.5 years as of March 2023. Most youth in county Secure Youth Treatment Facilities (SYTF) as of May 2023 hold high school diplomas or equivalents. However, DJJ data reports that only 50% of youth in their system possess a high school credential. Interviews reveal that, excluding Los Angeles County, the population of youth in secure treatment at county facilities varies widely, ranging from as few as five to more than two dozen. DJJ data further indicates that among their students, 25-30% receive special education services, while 20% participate in ESL services.

Key Challenges for Creating Higher Education Pathways

A handful of key challenges to be overcome in constructing higher education pathways were identified by field interviewees. They include the following:

Limited Economies of Scale

Several field interviewees highlighted a significant challenge in establishing high-quality higher education pathways for youth in secure treatment: the economies of scale are generally not achieved when serving these youth at the county level compared to the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). Community colleges typically have minimum enrollment requirements, referred to as minimum Full-time Equivalent Students (FTES), to offer courses, creating barriers for most counties due to their smaller secure treatment populations. One suggestion that emerged from the interviews is that this FTE requirement be relaxed for youth in confinement. In response to the existing policy reality, some County Offices of Education have opted for a "Contract Education" approach, where they pay community colleges to offer courses to a smaller number of students. However, given the lack of dedicated funding for County Offices of Education to serve youth who have already obtained high school diplomas, this solution may not be widely adoptable. To help address this issue, some counties, along with DJJ prior to closure, have considered pooling students across facilities for online courses, aiming to achieve economies of scale or meet the minimum enrollment requirements. The small size of the secure treatment youth population has also limited some counties' ability to access high-quality programs. These programs often have substantial up-front fixed costs designed to serve larger groups of 40 to 60 students. Lastly, the sparse number of youth in county confinement presents a unique challenge for bringing community college instructors into facilities for in-person teaching. Another approach to address the challenge of low scale economies has been to establish requirements for youth to attend college in person. This approach is in the early stages of adoption in Imperial County.

Need for Greater Resources

Funding to support the provision of higher education programming to incarcerated juvenile students in California has been made available to probation departments and community colleges through multiple state funding allocations in the past few years. County Offices of Education, however, lack a dedicated funding source to support higher education programs for these youth.

With the passage of SB 823, all youth in DJJ will be transferred to county jurisdictions, and their education will be provided for in county detention facilities. Along with the transfer of youth, counties will be provided annual funding based on a formula allocation which is expected to total approximately $200 million by 2025. Funding for modifying county juvenile facilities also totals around $110 million. Community colleges received about $6,800 per

student in the 2022-23 school year to serve incarcerated students.[117] In addition, an annual allocation of $15 million has been included in the state budget to support the expansion of college programming in secure youth facilities that will be administered and supported by the Rising Scholars Network of the California Community College Chancellor's Office. Each community college can receive approximately $300K per year.[118] Low-income students may receive Federal Pell Grants which cover colleges costs, although the prevalence of this type of funding appears limited.[119] They are also eligible to have their enrollment fees waived through the California College Promise Grant.

County Offices of Education (COEs), which act as the primary educational partner to probation departments that manage juvenile detention facilities, are required to provide education services for youth up to completion of a high school diploma or its equivalency. However, they do not receive dedicated funding to support postsecondary education for youth who have obtained their high school diploma but will remain in county confinement potentially for years. Some COEs are finding creative ways to fund college programs for incarcerated students, but mostly on an ad hoc basis.

Limited Career and Technical Education (CTE)/Vocational Education

While CTE is a critical alternative pathway to pursuing a bachelor's degree, viable vocational options are not widely available for most secure treatment youth. Some probation departments have secured a variety of online vocational options, while in-person options remain a pervasive challenge. There were a number of issues identified by interviewees that prevent more robust offerings, including lack of dedicated space, security issues, and finding qualified instructors. While several counties noted that they offer a small number of vocational options in their less-restrictive probation camps, juvenile halls and other long-term detention facilities often lack the space necessary to build out similar vocational programs. Some facilities are exploring adding such spaces within their existing building footprint. However, others noted that their ability to add such space is severely constrained by the limits of current facility designs. The lack of security protocols for providing vocational education to secure treatment youth was also cited as an impediment. Several probation departments noted a need for technical assistance in developing vocational programs that were educationally robust but also addressed security issues. Union safety concerns for correctional staff were also cited as a barrier to launching vocational programs. Lastly, vocational programs in juvenile facilities often struggle to find instructors who are deeply knowledgeable in the vocational

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[117] According to testimony by Orlando Sanchez Zavalla with the Legislative Analyst's Office to a Joint Hearing of the Assembly Budget Subcommittee #5 on Public Safety and Assembly Budget Subcommittee #2 on Education Finance, Monday, April 17, 2023

[118] Rising Scholars Network Requests for Application retrieved on June 15th, 2023 from chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/docs/curriculum/Rising-Scholars-network-JuvenileJusticeRFA30finalRemdiated-version.pdf?la=en&hash=8E98946A6E0332CB0934CC5B27EAD44F4A4DC5EE

[119] Interviews with staff at Community College Chancellor's Office

subject, are skilled teachers, and are willing to teach in juvenile correctional facilities. The success or failure of these vocational programs often hinges on the hiring, retention, or retirement of a single instructor. When available, vocational programs should ideally be combined with programs that enhance employability skills (e.g. communication, critical thinking, problem-solving, time management, collaboration, etc.). Some county probation departments, however, have reported some success in offering career technical education to secure treatment youth that includes in-person training. The Imperial County probation department reports that youth are obtaining career skills related to print shop fabrication, basic mechanics, data entry and basic computer skills. The San Francisco County probation department described offering hundreds of online CTE courses through its iCEV subscription (https://www.icevonline.com/) and providing in-person career exploration and preparation as well as vocational training in construction, sound engineering, digital literacy, basic computer skills and software coding through partnerships with local community organizations.

Probation Staffing Challenges

Probation department staffing shortages were the most often cited impediments to delivering quality educational programming for students in county juvenile facilities. All programming in juvenile halls and longer-term detention facilities is dependent on the availability of probation staff to escort students around the facility. Due to staff shortages, classes are frequently cancelled, student attendance is inconsistent, and probation staff in facilities are often unfamiliar with the youth in the facility due to temporary and rotating assignments. Furthermore, education for youth is restricted to their housing unit rather than held in classrooms. The reported causes of staffing shortages included lack of interest in probation staff positions, a view of work inside juvenile correctional facilities as deprecated, difficulty getting candidates through background checks, lack of promotion pathways within juvenile correctional facilities, and high staff turnover. The staff shortage has contributed to high levels of mandatory overtime as well as sick callouts. Teacher shortages in juvenile facilities were also reported by County Offices of Education. This is part of a larger teacher shortage within the state.[120] While probation staffing problems are widespread, they were not universal. Some have proactively addressed these shortfalls. Their strategies include enlisting teams to overhaul hiring and recruitment practices, producing recruitment videos, actively reaching out within the community, implementing efficient onboarding processes, providing clear promotional pathways for facility staff, increasing salaries, and offering extensive staff training, especially through Mandt[121], which focuses on reducing workplace violence.

[120] Sutcher, L., Carver-Thomas, D., and Darling-Hammond, L. (2018). *Understaffed and Underprepared: California Districts Report Ongoing Teacher Shortages (research brief).* Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

[121] https://www.mandtsystem.com/

Facilities and Program Issues for Long-Term Confinement

Facilities designed to accommodate secure treatment youth primarily function as short-term detention centers not intended for prolonged commitment. Their structural blueprint often mirrors that of maximum-security facilities. $100 million of state-provided funds earmarked in the 2022-23 budget for infrastructural improvements may alleviate some design issues, however, according to multiple probation department interviewees, the existing architectural layouts could pose formidable obstacles in upgrading these facilities to meet appropriate standards for long-term confinement. Facilities located in certain settings also may face very expensive renovation costs and lengthy disruptions to existing programs when such upgrades are undertaken. Additionally, many programs facilities offer are crafted for brief stays, not extended confinement. This design philosophy makes it challenging to ensure consistent, ongoing educational services without programming gaps, and to establish suitable program progressions that span potentially multiple years. Some counties operate long-term youth commitment programs in the form of camps or ranches that can support the ability of youth to “step-down” to less restrictive environments over time. However, in the near-term, most SYTF youth remain segregated from youth in camps and ranches until details of security protocols and systems are figured out.

Barriers for Community Services Partners

Several probation department interviewees noted strong and longstanding relationships with key community service providers whom they consider instrumental in their overall program effectiveness. These included San Francisco, Tehama, and Imperial counties. However, some interviewees, probation and otherwise, noted that challenges can arise with these partnerships for some jurisdictions. The ability of community-based service providers to gain access to juvenile correctional facilities was a commonly cited barrier. Some interviewees described being denied facility access due to ideological differences or other unclear or subjective criteria. The procurement process itself was also described as an onerous one that can severely delay or deny access to community providers. College support programs such as Rising Scholars, Project Rebound, Underground Scholars, Prison Education Project, and Project Change have a presence in multiple facilities within the state—but such levels of access depend in large part on developing personal relationships and securing internal champions. Many interviewees called for transparent and comprehensive partnerships with community service providers.

Examples of Community Service Partners

Several community-based services providers were identified from interviews conducted for this report. Below is a list of such providers, the services they programs provide, and an outline each program's objectives and core activities:

Rising Scholars

The Rising Scholars Network comprises several participating California Community Colleges and is devoted to aiding incarcerated and formerly incarcerated students. They provide degree- and certificate-granting programs within correctional facilities as well as on-campus support for students involved in the criminal legal system. One of their key goals is to boost the participation and success rates of juvenile justice-involved students in community colleges. They presently serve 23 juvenile justice facilities across the state. The Network's programs for juvenile justice youth are anchored by three main principles:

- **On-site Programming:** This includes in-person and online courses supported by technology access within juvenile facilities and at community and alternative schools. The comprehensive education program offers UC/CSU credit courses and college readiness workshops, multiple pathways for degrees, transfers, and certificates, as well as dual enrollment to obtain high school diplomas and college credit concurrently.
- **Supported Transition to College Campuses:** After release, direct support is provided for transition to college campuses, including handling high school transcripts, placement, and counseling. Campus tours, orientations, and comprehensive student support services, such as dedicated counseling and financial aid, basic needs resources, and stipends for textbooks and other college materials, are also available.
- **College Buy-in and Commitment:** Colleges pledge their dedication to the success of the program through the employment of dedicated program staff, providing dedicated on-campus space for student interactions and meetings, and securing committed community partners like local high school districts, County Offices of Education, probation departments, and community-based organizations.

Project Rebound

Project Rebound is a program designed to support the higher education and successful reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals into the California State University system. By providing students with essential resources, the program aims to offer an alternative to the recurring cycle of mass incarceration and bolster community strength and safety. Currently, Project Rebound operates across 15 CSU campuses. The program concentrates on five Key Service Objectives:

- **Promoting a college-going culture** among currently and formerly incarcerated people and establishing recruitment pathways.
- **Assisting prospective students** in preparing, applying, and matriculating.
- **Supporting enrolled students** in persisting and graduating.
- **Encouraging enrolled students to engage** in student life, leadership roles, community service, and civic participation.

- **Creating and nurturing empowering networks** among Project Rebound alumni and students.

Furthermore, Project Rebound offers additional Education and Support Services, such as equity-focused outreach and advising, cultivating cultures of belonging, meeting student basic needs through infrastructures of care, offering student employment and internship opportunities, and fostering civic engagement and community leadership. The program also coordinates efforts to institute equitable access in admissions and build seamless transfer pathways with the California Community Colleges.

Underground Scholars

Underground Scholars was founded in spring 2013 by formerly incarcerated and justice system-impacted students at UC Berkeley. As members graduated and moved to different campuses within the UC system for their graduate studies, they initiated chapters at these locations. Currently, the organization has established or is in the process of developing chapters at nine UC schools.

The work of Underground Scholars is grounded in four fundamental pillars:

- **Recruitment:** Through programs such as Ambassador Program, Transfer Program, Cross Enrollment, Incarcerated Scholars Program, Incarceration to College, and Transfer Empowerment Day.
- **Retention:** Utilizing resources such as tutoring & advising, empowerment & internships, financial support, community space and events, satellite services (e.g., financial aid and basic needs), orientation, and graduation.
- **Advocacy:** Engaging in individual advocacy for students, policy fellowships, state policy and budget advocacy, voter guides, and political education.
- **Wellness:** facilitating recovery circles, on-site healing clinics, wellness stipends, and wellness events.

The ultimate goal of the program is to enable each student to attain the degree of his or her choice, whether it be a certificate, associate degree, bachelor's degree, or graduate degree. Other objectives include fostering self-love, promoting self-honor, and integrating members as vital components of the community.

Prison Education Project

The Prison Education Project (PEP) offers educational opportunities to incarcerated individuals in 47 correctional facilities throughout California and beyond, utilizing the help of 3,000 university student and faculty volunteers. Since 2011, PEP has served approximately 10,000 in-custody students, providing academic, life skills, and career development programs.

PEP runs a Reintegration Academy, a 10-week program that invites 20-30 parolees onto a college campus. Participants are screened by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's Southern Region and go through intensive academic, life skills, and career development modules. They receive a gift card in the first week for purchasing business attire, a laptop in the fifth week, and are enrolled at Mt. San Antonio College in the eighth week. In the ninth week, they attend a job fair, and by the tenth week, they graduate with a certificate of completion.

PEP aims to establish a "Prison-to-School Pipeline," equipping in-custody students with the cognitive tools to be productive citizens. PEP leverages local resources, particularly university students and faculty volunteers, to effect change. PEP highlights tbenefits of higher education for people who are incarcerated, including a 43% lower chance of reoffending, reduced incarceration costs compared to education costs, improved job prospects upon release, and the ability to overcome the stigma of a criminal record, with 75% able to secure employment. PEP also tracks micro-steps such as first contact after release and task completion, like reaching out for career assistance or college enrollment.

Project Change

Project Change is the first community college supported program in California to provide wrap-around student support services, direct access to postsecondary education for incarcerated youth, and in-person college instruction inside juvenile youth facilities. The program links students to various resources and programs at the College of San Mateo, including a college readiness summer bridge program, social and academic support services, nationally recognized cohort learning communities (Puente, Umoja, and Mana), and vocational education programs. Students are guided to on-campus resources for enhanced success, and programming includes orientation, enrollment, registration, financial aid, weekly meetings for the summer session, pre-selected courses, project meetings, counseling, and mentorship.

The program leverages a network of volunteer faculty, staff mentors, and a retention specialist to assist students in their first college year. Project Change unifies the College of San Mateo and San Mateo County community organizations in a shared endeavor to help underrepresented student populations transition to community college.

The state's $15 million commitment to community college programs for detained youth through Rising Scholars funding, including dual enrollment programs, draws inspiration from Project Change. As the state-funded grant program is rolled out, courses will be provided both on campuses and in juvenile detention facilities. Additional support for formerly incarcerated students will include ongoing college tuition, food, housing, and transportation. The aim is not just to reach students once they're incarcerated, but to offer a pathway for system-impacted young people to engage in higher education as an alternative to incarceration.

Accelerated High School Completion Without College Eligibility or Preparedness

AB 167 (Adams), AB 216 (Stone) and AB 2306 (Frazier) are a series of bills focused on transient student populations that may have difficulty completing high school. It exempts incarcerated students from local school district graduation requirements after the 10th grade and requires only that they meet state minimum graduation requirements by completing 130 credits in specified subject areas, rather than the 160 credits ordinarily required. Several interviewees have noted a steep increase in high school graduation rates among detained youth following passage of these bills. While the law's intent is to facilitate high school graduation for these transient students, it could unintentionally obstruct certain higher education pathways. For example, these students do not complete A-G requirements—rendering them ineligible for admission into the University of California (UC) or California State University (CSU) systems. Furthermore, many of these youth may be unaware of these repercussions when they opt to pursue a diploma that only meets state requirements. Students in secure confinement who completed their high school diploma with good grades and enrolled in community college after release have also reported that they felt significantly underprepared for college-level coursework. One concern expressed by several interviewees is that youth receiving high school diplomas aren't prepared for the successful transition to college. A recent analysis of youth confined in DJJ facilities between 2018 and 2023 found that 85% scored below grade-level on 12th-grade reading assessments and many graduated with reading levels below the 8th grade.[122]

Challenges Working with Four-Year Universities

A common sentiment among probation department interviewees was the aspiration to establish stronger connections with four-year universities. Such linkages would not only support the post-release transition of youth into these institutions, but also provide incarcerated youth with the opportunity to enroll in online courses offered by these colleges during their incarceration. However, the availability of online degree programs or courses through the UC or CSU systems remains extremely limited. However, officials at the San Francisco County probation department have reported that secure treatment youth in their facilities are able to take both two-year and four-year college courses online.

Need for Greater Collaboration among Key Systems

A recurring theme in the interviews was the crucial need for enhanced collaboration among key system stakeholders to create effective higher education pathways for incarcerated youth. The stakeholders identified include probation departments that house committed youth, County Offices of Education (COEs) that provide them with educational services, community colleges that provide instruction within facilities as well as services that help build bridges from confinement to college campus, and four-year universities such as CSU and UC schools to

[122] Marquez, Betty and Willis J., Daniel (2023) "CA: In California's youth justice system, many high schoolers graduate with grade-school reading skills" in Edsource. Retrieved from https://edsource.org/2023/in-californias-youth-justice-system-high-school-graduates-with-grade-school-reading-skills/688955 on June 11th, 2023.

which youth may ultimately transfer. The current state of collaboration across these stakeholders often appears disjointed. Moreover, it is worth noting that there isn't a one-size-fits-all collaborative model that can be applied uniformly across all 58 counties in the state.

County probation departments house incarcerated students and have primary control over the educational options they may access. The extent of these departments' collaboration with other stakeholders is key to constructing effective pathways. Several staff at probation departments, when interviewed, noted that they have limited connection with 4-year universities.

County Offices of Education (COEs) serve as the main educational partners for probation departments. According to state laws, COEs are mandated to provide educational services leading to a high school diploma or its equivalent for incarcerated youth via juvenile court schools. These offices frequently conduct academic assessments, transcript reviews, mental health screenings, and social-emotional needs assessments, as well as determine the requirement for disability services like Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). They also assist in exploring college and career interests, striving to attain a more comprehensive and realistic assessment of student needs. Nevertheless, their mission and funding for educating incarcerated youth generally ends once youth have received their high school diplomas or equivalent. Some interviewed COEs indicate that they continue to provide some services to incarcerated youth who have attained high school diplomas to prepare them for higher education pathways. Looking forward, numerous staff at COEs indicated their roles are unclear and they lack direct funding tied to a well-defined postsecondary mission.

Among California's higher education institutions, community colleges are arguably in the best position to support higher education pathways for incarcerated youth, particularly because they are open-access, and enrollment doesn't require a high school diploma. About 22 community colleges have agreements with some county juvenile schools, a figure poised to rise substantially with a new annual infusion of $15 million intended in part to expand these programs at community colleges across the state. Currently, the state does not monitor the number of students enrolled in or completing community college courses in juvenile facilities, a gap that the California Community College Chancellor's Office aims to address in 2023.

Building Higher Education Pathways: A Call to Action for California

Building effective higher education pathways for incarcerated youth in California is both feasible and urgent. Below are detailed recommendations for constructing higher education pathways organized within a policy and program conceptual framework.

The Pillars of Higher Education Pathways

Higher education pathways can be metaphorically described as a bridge to opportunity, upheld by three crucial "pillars" (see Figure 5).

The first pillar, "administrative pathways," encompasses institutional elements that must be organized and aligned to bring the route to fruition. These components include policies, procedures, educational offerings, staffing, materials, and technological tools that enable the commencement and progression of an academic journey. The second pillar encapsulates the "pathway supports" that encourage a young person to embark and continue on this academic journey. They provide the guidance needed to navigate administrative pathways and persist over time to reach the meaningful destination. These supports encompass a wide range of decision-making and developmental supports like counseling and mentoring.

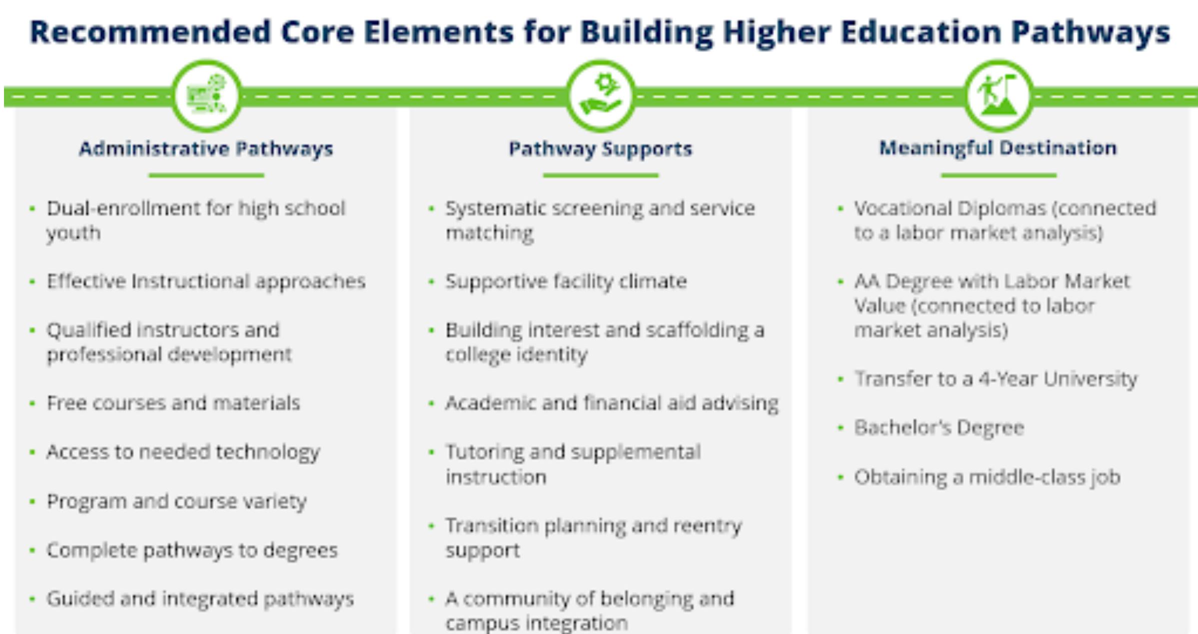
Lastly, the third pillar signifies a "meaningful destination." This is the long-term goal to which a higher education pathway ultimately leads.

Figure 5. Pillars of Higher Education Pathways

Recommended Elements for Each Higher Education Pillar

Each pillar supporting higher educational pathways comprises a set of elements crucial for effectively enabling the achievement of higher education goals. Figure 5 provides a summary of these elements, encapsulating findings derived from research on proven and promising practices as well as insights collected from key stakeholders involved with the juvenile justice system across California. These elements may serve as an inventory designed to optimize the effectiveness of higher education pathways for youth in secure confinement. The section below will explore each element of the three pillars depicted in Figure 5.

Figure 6. Recommended Elements of each Higher Education Pillar



Meaningful Destinations

Before delving into the construction of higher education pathways and the provision of necessary support for incarcerated students to traverse them, it's essential first to envision the end goal these pathways are designed to reach. All higher education pathways should ultimately lead to a career that offers earnings substantial enough to comfortably support a family. Studies show that while obtaining a bachelor's degree is often the most common and potentially most rewarding route for boosting lifetime income, attaining associate degrees or vocational certificates in specific subjects can be equally beneficial and in some cases more

rewarding than bachelor's degrees.[123] For instance, individuals who earn associate degrees or vocational diplomas in technical fields—such as health sciences, computers/IT, or engineering/drafting—typically earn more over the 20 years following high school graduation than those holding bachelor's degrees in fields like the liberal arts, humanities, or education.[124] Apprenticeships also provide routes to well-compensated jobs within California, although the number of such positions is relatively small (around 84,000 in 2017) compared to academic or vocational degree programs.[125] Whether focusing on reaching a bachelor's degree, an associate degree, a vocational diploma, or certificate, educators should assess local and state labor market data to ensure that incarcerated students can ultimately find economic opportunity with whatever credential they obtain. This includes ensuring that incarcerated youth are trained for jobs that will not bar them due to their criminal histories.

Administrative Pathways

Dual enrollment for high school students

In California, dual enrollment programs provide high school students with the opportunity to take college-level courses while completing their high school education. These courses—which can be hosted at a high school, on a college campus, or online—enable students to simultaneously earn high school *and* college credits. Such a program can prove particularly beneficial for incarcerated students, allowing them to expedite their academic progress, reduce college tuition costs, and facilitate a smoother transition into college. However, it's important to note that the specifics of dual enrollment programs can vary across school districts and colleges. Factors such as eligibility requirements and the range of courses offered can differ. Several interviewees highlighted the critical importance of extending dual enrollment opportunities to youth in secure confinement. Despite its acknowledged importance, dual enrollment remains under-established for incarcerated youth in most facilities. Where it does exist, it is primarily delivered online. However, the feasibility of these programs presents its own challenges. Per some interviewees, a significant hurdle is the academic readiness of the incarcerated youth. Many students in confinement facilities who are still pursuing a high school education may not be academically prepared to handle college-level coursework.

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[123] Carnevale, A. P., Rose, S. J. & Cheah, B. (2011) *The College Payoff: Education, Occupations, Lifetime Earnings*. The Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce; Backes, B., Holzer, H. J., & Velez, E. D. (2015). Is it worth it? Postsecondary education and labor market outcomes for the disadvantaged. *IZA Journal of Labor Policy*, 4(1), 1-30.

[124] Kim, C., & Tamborini, C. R. (2019). Are they still worth it? The long-run earnings benefits of an associate degree, vocational diploma or certificate, and some college. RSF: *The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences*, 5(3), 64-85.

[125] Johnson, R. L. (2018). *Evaluating equal opportunity in California certified apprenticeships* (Doctoral dissertation, California State University, Sacramento); Koller, V. (2018). *Closing the Gap: The Future of Apprenticeship in California*. Jobs for the Future; For total apprenticeship positions in 2017, see *California Division of Apprenticeship Standards - Annual reports* 2017 retrieved from https://www.dir.ca.gov/das/DAS_annualReports.html on May 21, 2023.

Effective Instructional Approaches

Interviewees exhibited a diverse range of views on the efficacy of instructional approaches in detention facilities, including in-person college instruction, online courses offered primarily through community colleges, and correspondence courses colloquially referred to as "packet" work. While each approach has its advantages and disadvantages, many interviewees recommended a hybrid model that includes in-person, online, and, in certain situations, correspondence or testing-based education.

In-person instruction from college faculty within detention facilities was widely viewed as the ideal offering under the best of circumstances. Participating in in-person classes allows students to ask questions and get feedback in real time, boosts their engagement, helps them build connections with professors, reinforces a college student identity, and ultimately provides a higher fidelity experience of college life. Nevertheless, limitations such as a lack of sufficient faculty—especially in rural areas—and the small student population in secure treatment facilities (ranging from 5 to 20) impose critical constraints. Meeting the minimum full-time equivalent students (FTES) required for community colleges to offer courses in the facility would necessitate many students enrolling in the same course or degree program, thus severely limiting choice. Some interviewees proposed allowing youth who meet certain requirements and milestones to attend colleges in person on furlough.

Online instruction has been suggested as an alternative to overcome some of the challenges facing in-person instruction. Online degree programs, particularly from community colleges, provide a plethora of options catering to varying interests. They can also mitigate many of the issues arising due to small student population sizes. An added advantage is the potential for educational continuity post-release, enabling students to complete ongoing coursework even when released far from the commitment facility. However, drawbacks include the lack of real-time interaction, varying levels of computer literacy, potential disengagement among students with ADHD, and the risk of students not viewing themselves as “college material” or “real college students” based on negative or degraded experience with online education.

To address these issues, interviewees suggested complementing online instruction with in-person teaching for general education and college skill-building courses (e.g., study habits and note-taking), along with in-person tutoring from individuals embedded within the course. It was also emphasized that online instruction should include regular “synchronous” interaction where students and their professors interact in real time, usually via a video interface. Best practices listed in Section II that may help improve the quality of online courses include: a weekly synchronous session between the instructors and students, face-to-face sessions between the instructors and individual students held twice or more per term, the use of physical textbooks, and the timely provision of grades and feedback.

Correspondence courses, while mostly criticized by interviewees, were still considered to have potential value. These courses often involve worksheets or "packet" work, leading to low student engagement and learning, compounded by potential weeks-long delays in feedback or grading. Despite these issues, interviewees suggested not ruling out correspondence options

completely, as they may provide an educational avenue for youth who either enter facilities during a period that is outside of enrollment windows for online courses. Furthermore, it was suggested that correspondence courses could expedite the completion of general education requirements.

Curriculum and Pedagogical Approaches

Given the considerable academic skill deficits among confined youth, it's crucial for educators to adopt evidence-based curricular and pedagogical methods where feasible. Among the various programs available, Read 180 stands out for its evidence-based success in enhancing reading skills among incarcerated students. Regrettably, there's no proven equivalent for boosting mathematical abilities.

Given the wide range of reading and math skills among incarcerated students within a residential unit or facility, it's imperative for educators to utilize differentiated instruction. This approach involves tailoring lessons and supports to suit individual student's skill levels through initial skill assessments and ongoing progress monitoring. In addition, peer-mediated instruction can be beneficial, enabling advanced students to guide and support their less-skilled counterparts.

Beyond foundational subjects like math and reading, ethnic studies courses can be powerful tools to foster interest and develop scholarly identities among students as well as improve academic outcomes. An evaluation of an ethnic studies program with non-incarcerated, youth of color yielded impressively positive results, showing notable improvements in attendance, grades, and high school graduation and college enrollment.[126] Such an offering might yield similar benefits for incarcerated students who are overwhelmingly Black and Latino. The College of Ethnic Studies at California State University, San Francisco, in partnership with Project Rebound, provide an exemplary model of an ethnic studies program designed for incarcerated college students. They offer an undergraduate certificate in Ethnic Studies comprised of four online Ethnic Studies courses that are taught by San Francisco State faculty and fulfill lower division general education requirements at any California State University. Moreover, students enrolled in the program receive personalized assistance with admission into San Francisco State upon completion of the certificate.

Qualified Instructors and Professional Development

Interviewees at community colleges noted the challenges of finding in-person instructors who are willing to deal with the rigmarole of teaching within correctional facilities. This could entail lengthy commutes to detention centers, protracted wait times for entry, occasional harassment from correctional staff, potential exposure to pepper spray, teaching at unconventional times and on irregular days, struggles in securing classroom space, potential

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[126] Dee, T. S., & Penner, E. K. (2017). The causal effects of cultural relevance: Evidence from an ethnic studies curriculum. *American Educational Research Journal*, 54(1), 127-166; Bonilla, S., Dee, T. S., & Penner, E. K. (2021). Ethnic studies increases longer-run academic engagement and attainment. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 118(37), e2026386118.

physical danger or harm, class or programs that can be cancelled with little or not notice due to disturbance or inadequate staffing levels, and the overall emotional toll of engaging with students who have severe trauma histories among other challenges. Ideal instructors, as described by numerous interviewees, should be empathetic, flexible, self-aware, and adept at building relationships. Professional development in several areas was suggested for college faculty delivering in-person instruction in these facilities. Such training would include basic safety procedures, effective youth development strategies, trauma-informed practices, self-care, classroom management, and individualized instruction. Importantly, these professional development trainings should be offered consistently and continuously. In addition to training, classroom coaching should be provided to new instructors by more experienced ones.

Free Courses and Materials

While enrollment fees are waived for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated students under categorical programs at California's community colleges, and books and material costs can be made free through reimbursements to colleges from existing funding, tuition fees are, which average around $1,240 annually, are not covered.[127] Some interviewees recommended that all courses and materials should be completely free to these students.

Program and Course Variety

Helping students embark on a higher education pathway requires offering educational options that are closely aligned with their interests. They should not be steered to a limited set of educational pathways. Online education helps create the greatest variety possible. However, providing this breadth of choice is significantly more challenging through in-person instruction. Some interviewees proposed focusing on in-person courses that fulfill general education requirements for Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADTs) which guarantee priority admission to the California State University (CSU) system.

Complete Pathways to Associate or Bachelor's Degrees

Given that youth in secure treatment will be confined, in some cases for years, several interviewees highlighted the need for continuous education programming in confinement that will allow students to complete one or more associate degrees and possibly a bachelor's degree. Courses offered should be credit-bearing and, where appropriate, CSU/UC-transferrable.

[127] Average community college tuition in 2023 retrieved on September 6, 2023 from https://www.communitycollegereview.com/tuition-stats/california#:~:text=For%20California%20community%20colleges%2C%20the,is%20approximately%20%2420%2C540%20per%20year.

Guided and Integrated Pathways

Community colleges serving incarcerated students should provide them with Guided Pathways that help them explore academic and career options, choose a program of study, and develop a full-program educational plan. This involves creating clear curricular pathways to further education or employment. Helping them pursue effective pathways should start with assessment, orientation, and advising and also include a variety of supports that help them persist on education pathways to completion. Within Guided Pathways, students should also be able to explore both career pathways and academic pathways concurrently. Known as "integrated pathways," this approach to curricular design offers youth the ability to complete requirements for an academic pathway while they also complete requirements for a career pathway. Consequently, it furnishes them with the flexibility to transition to a different pathway if they later decide to alter their course. For students committed to career pathways, community colleges should introduce "stackable certificates." These short-term, sequential qualifications incrementally contribute towards a more extensive credential, such as an associate degree. This strategic approach ensures students can extract potential labor market value from each credential earned while accruing credits for a long-term qualification they may aspire to pursue in the future.

Access to Needed Technology

Numerous interviewees emphasized the pivotal role of adequate technological access in enabling students to engage in classes, conduct online research, and finish assignments. Supporting these activities necessitates equipping students with tablets or laptops, along with broadband internet access to facilitate effective participation in online courses. A valuable insight derived from Section II of this report endorses laptops over tablets due to their superior functionality and security provisions. These provisions enable restrictions on the usage of certain websites or online services, bolstering safety while facilitating learning. Laptops should also include Microsoft Office software for completing assignments.

Probation departments in Imperial County and San Francisco County both provide students with laptops for college coursework.

It was suggested by interviewees that allowing students to take laptops back to their cells could enhance their capability to work on assignments efficiently. In terms of online research support, one County Office of Education reported the implementation of the correctional education version of EBSCO Host. This resource provides students with access to approved full-text articles, thereby aiding them in completing college research assignments. Security concerns with accessing technology were voiced by multiple interviewees. Internet access, online services and devices should allow for restrictions to ensure both security for unauthorized uses and confidentiality for youth while using them.

Pathway Supports

Systematic Screening and Service Matching

The research summarized in the "Promising Practices" section of Section II as well as the findings from field interviews emphasize the importance of systematically screening youth when they enter juvenile facilities and matching evidence-based services in accordance with the principles of risk, need, and responsivity. Screenings should encompass several areas including education, disabilities and necessary accommodations, mental disorders, substance use, and family history information along with an exploration of educational aspirations. Assessments of academic aptitude should also be conducted regularly throughout the confinement period. One probation department in the state noted that they conduct these screenings every 90 days. Moreover, mental health, substance use, and recidivism assessments should be validated with justice-involved populations that are racially and ethnically diverse. According to most interviews, COEs take the lead in conducting assessments, particularly those related to education. However, some probation departments supplement these assessments with ones focused on juvenile recidivism risk and mental health. Tools referenced by interviewees included the Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT) and the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument – Second Version (MAYSI-2).[128]

All screening assessments should be conducted within a framework for multi-tiered systems of supports where: in Tier 1, school-wide behavior expectations and high quality instruction are provided to all students; in Tier 2, additional targeted support, particularly small group intervention, is provided to students who are not making adequate progress in Tier 1; and, in Tier 3, intensive, individualized support is provided to students showing difficulty after Tier 2. A multidisciplinary case management team should be convened to discuss the assessment findings for all youth, identify criminogenic needs, and establish specific interventions or goals for the youth every six months consistent with risk, needs, and responsivity principles. To the fullest extent possible, youth should be matched to evidence-based mental health interventions that should continue after transitioning to the community and especially during enrollment in college. For youth with disabilities, educational accommodations should be provided, and a vocational rehabilitation counselor should be added to their multidisciplinary case management team.

Supportive Facility Climate

The social climate in a juvenile facility reflects the relationships between youth and staff, peer relationships among youth, and facility rules, practices, and routines. Several interviewees emphasized the importance of creating an institutional climate that is trauma-informed, where rehabilitation is central, and everything is done to support the positive development of youth in

[128] For PACT see Baglivio, M. T. (2017). Positive achievement change tool. The encyclopedia of juvenile delinquency and justice, 1-4; For MAYSI-2 see Grisso, T., & Barnum, R. (2000). Massachusetts Youth screening instrument, second version (MAYSI-2): User's manual and technical report. Worcetser, MA: University of Massachusetts Medical School

care. Ways of describing this institutional climate included the infusion of positive youth development practices throughout the institution. This included having high expectations and aspirations for youth, valuing their strengths, being trauma-informed, utilizing "respect" as a currency for relationship-building, expounding the value of education from the leadership down through the ranks, and ultimately implementing what is preached. Several interviewees also noted a need to shift from an "Ask-Tell-Make" law enforcement approach to gaining compliance, especially for youth with trauma histories. They argued instead for moving away from control-centered approaches where staff use pepper spray or group punishments toward a posture where probation staff seek to authentically engage with youth and encourage deeper interactions with them. Interviewees lifted up a number of probation departments across the state that have not only embraced these philosophies but have been actively institutionalizing them for years. There is a deep well of experience and knowledge among leaders of probation departments that could be leveraged to help others overcome common challenges. One department, for example, changed the name of its facility to the "Juvenile Rehabilitation Facility" and organized their policies, programs and practices around supporting young people. Some examples of their approach include de-escalation rooms, mindfulness training, and an overall effort to create a culture where employees strive to be more successful in working with youth. Training was also cited as a critical ingredient with example trainings that include sessions offered by Mandt and Edward Latessa.

Several interviewees noted that there are great staff working in probation departments across the state who seek to engage with youth in supportive ways, but, with notable exceptions, they often lack institutional support and reinforcement for their efforts. Several policy changes, recommended as a means to create more supportive climates, include not using behavioral infractions as the basis for denying access to education, creating a system of incentives or a "token economy" that rewards youth for good behavior, eliminating the use of pepper spray, providing professional development to enhance the ability of staff to communicate effectively with young people, substituting high security policies intended for short-term detention facilities with medium-security ones better suited to long-term commitment centers, and conducting facility-wide activities that celebrate education such as science fairs, book clubs, and monthly essay contests.

- **Caring Adult Relationships:** A common factor consistently emerged in the life narratives of youth who experienced juvenile confinement and subsequently followed a successful path to a college degree and beyond: the presence of a caring adult who helped trigger and support a radical change in the youth's life trajectory. Having strong mentors, advocates, and cheerleaders is critical for facilitating the deep investment in development and change that youth in juvenile facilities must undergo to both aspire to and pursue higher education successfully. Formerly incarcerated college graduates illustrated in many ways how institutional attachments were mediated by interpersonal ones. Overcoming deep-seated shame, guilt, and fatalistic views is often required for youth to succeed educationally. This was reportedly enabled by interacting with caring adults who see much more in youth than the youth see in themselves. Connections

between such adults and the youth's family are also an important link in sustaining the pursuit of academic and career goals.

- **Credible Messengers and Mentors:** Credible messengers are individuals who typically have personal experience with the criminal legal system and have undergone a transformation in their own lives. They use their lived experience and credibility within the community to engage with youth who are involved in or at risk of incarceration. Several interviewees emphasized the importance of credible messengers who have successfully pursued higher education interacting with and providing mentorship to youth while they are in confinement. Credible messengers serve as mentors, guides, and advocates. They help others navigate challenging situations, make better choices, and access services and support. Their own experiences with higher education make them relatable and believable to those they seek to help. They can effectively convey the message that change is possible, and they can provide practical advice on how to embark on a higher education pathway. The role of credible messengers starts while youth are confined and continues after reentry and the transition to college. However, interviewees pointed out potential hurdles that credible messengers face when attempting to work in youth facilities. Certain institutional policies may prohibit individuals with felony convictions from interacting with incarcerated youth.
- **Regular Course Attendance:** Attending class routinely is central to success in higher education. Several interviewees noted, however, that incarcerated youth are frequently unable to attend classes due to probation staffing shortages or lockdowns.
- **Incentivize College Participation:** Based on recommended practices in the research literature and interviews, juvenile facilities should make higher education desirable, with rewards and privileges that serve to increase motivation and aspirations. Additionally, judges should knock time off of youth commitment terms for participating in higher education or allow step-downs to less restrictive environments if youth achieve certain education milestones.
- **Create a Token Economy System to Reinforce and Reward Positive Behavior:** With youth moving to long-term confinement in county facilities, creating a token economy is a promising approach to improve facility climate and individual behavior. A form of behavior management designed to increase desirable behavior and decrease undesirable behavior, a token economy uses tokens to encourage positive behavior, adherence to rules and regulations, and completion of expected tasks. These tokens act as a type of currency that can be exchanged for a variety of desired items or privileges. The exact nature of these rewards can vary, but they often include an array of options youth can choose from like extra recreational or free time, special meals or snacks, access to games or electronics, or even temporary increases in visitation privileges. This type of approach is designed to provide a clear, immediate, and tangible reinforcement for positive behavior with the goal of increasing these behaviors over time. It's important to note that a token economy system needs to be carefully managed and regularly reviewed. This includes ensuring that the rewards are actually desirable to the

individuals, that tokens are being distributed fairly and consistently, and that there aren't opportunities for individuals to "game" the system.

Building interest and scaffolding a college identify

A significant question that new college students often consciously or unconsciously bring to the college setting is "Do I belong?"[129] Accepting the identity of a college student and believing that they are genuinely positioned for success in a college environment is perhaps the first and most important obstacle facing incarcerated students as they pursue a postsecondary pathway. For youth in secure treatment facilities, several environmental aspects can hinder this sense of belonging. Often, there is a lack of dedicated classroom space, and college courses are conducted in “day rooms,” or rooms for common activities, where a flurry of other activities might be underway. Some interviewees advocated for the creation of dedicated college spaces within these facilities, complete with college branding, comfortable furniture, and other elements intended to foster a college-like atmosphere. It was also suggested that students should have access to quiet areas for homework and desks in their rooms, they should be allowed to take laptops to their rooms to complete coursework, and they should be provided alternative attire to mask their confinement while they attend online courses. Staff at San Francisco County’s Probation Department report that any student who is enrolled in a college class has access to a laptop and that staff ensure that there is ample time for them to attend class and complete all work associated with their courses. Youth are also offered the opportunity to have personal study rooms adjacent to their sleeping rooms, outfitted with desks, bookshelves, and sitting areas. Lastly, the department is working to upgrade classrooms in secure treatment units to include carrel desks, chairs and décor to create an environment resembling a college library or lounge.

In terms of academic support and skill-building, each student should be equipped with a comprehensive educational plan, soft skills training, and enrollment in preparatory courses like "College 101" and “study habits” to facilitate a successful transition to the college experience. To help fully cement a college identity, students should be afforded interaction with college students not involved in the justice system, either through programs like the Prison Education Project or in-person class attendance via furloughs. Lastly, youth should be allowed to wear college clothing in confinement facilities as well as to have items with college logos while attending college courses.

Academic and Financial Aid Advising

To aid students in navigating the intricacies of enrollment, course planning and financing college, detailed academic and financial aid guidance from counselors equipped to work with incarcerated students is essential. Academic advising should facilitate students’ exploration of their interests through instruments like career inventories. It should introduce a range of

[129] Walton, G. M., & Brady, S. T. (2017). The many questions of belonging. *Handbook of competence and motivation: Theory and application*, 2, 272-293.

potential career and educational pathways, aid in developing education plans, assist with class registration, and provide support for transfers to CSU or UC schools. Meanwhile, financial aid advising should address the unique challenges encountered by incarcerated students. This guidance should extend beyond FAFSA completion and include advice on when and how to utilize resources such as Pell Grants, Cal Grants, and other sources of aid.

Staff at probation departments in both Imperial and San Francisco counties reported important partnerships with local community colleges to connect secure treatment youth with disability support services, extended opportunity services, and monthly in-person counseling regarding issues like future goals, college registration, and coursework. San Francisco County probation also partners with a local charter high school to provide individualized academic support for its secure treatment youth.

While regular in-person access to a community college advisor is optimal, advising departments at most community colleges in California are severely understaffed.[130] Some community colleges have more than 1,000 students assigned to a single counselor who can offer only cursory advising for each student. A potential tool to help support staff at County Offices of Education, community organizations working with youth in confinement (e.g. Rising Scholars, Project Rebound, Prison Education Project), parents and the youth themselves is a free college advising platform known as TecoGuide (https://tecoguide.com/). According to site developers, TecoGuide helps students identify all available academic and CTE programs across the community college system including certificate and associate degrees programs. It also guides students in planning, monitoring and changing academic pathways for transfer to both UC and CSU bachelor degree programs. The site also provides a guide to available financial aid, support services, and campus services at each campus. The site developers report that they expect data for all 116 California community college campuses to be available on the website by December 2023. A separate feature that supports the ability of advisors, counselors, mentors, teachers and parents to assist aspiring students on the platform is planned for launch in late 2024. One challenge for which TecoGuide might be particularly useful is assisting youth who may attend one community college while in confinement maintain academic progress at a transfer community college near where they may reside upon release. Mapping the alignment of degree course requirements across colleges may be a critical impediment that this platform can help address.

Tutoring and Supplemental Instruction

Incarcerated students that enroll in college classes, whether online or in-person, require a great deal of support before and during courses that include tutoring and supplemental instruction.

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[130] Fain, Paul. (2012, May 28th). Back of the Line: Some California community colleges have 1,700 students per academic adviser. But a state law designed to protect faculty jobs may help prevent the hiring of more counselors. Inside Higher Education. Retrieved on October 4th, 2023 from https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2012/05/29/law-may-contribute-advising-overload-californias-community-colleges#:~:text=Some%20California%20community%20colleges%20have,the%20hiring%20of%20more%20counselors.&text=Lines%20at%20San%20Diego%20Miramar,to%20two%20hours%20or%20more.

Some interviewees suggested that tutors should be embedded in courses themselves. While they are high school graduates, many interviewees noted that incarcerated students typically lack the academic preparation necessary to succeed in college coursework on their own. In addition to tutoring, students should be provided with Supplemental Instruction (SI), an academic support program often used in higher education to enhance student performance and retention. The SI model involves regular, out-of-class, peer-led group study sessions. These sessions are facilitated by SI leaders—students who have previously done well in the course. SI leaders attend the course lectures alongside the students so they can remain up to date with the course content, and then guide these group sessions, helping their peers better understand the course material. The SI sessions are not remedial and they're not simply group study or tutoring. Instead, SI leaders employ collaborative activities to encourage comprehensive understanding and application of the course concepts. This approach helps students improve their grasp of the subject and their study skills, often leading to better course grades. It is also proactive, aiming to help students before they fail or drop the course.[131]

Transition Planning and Reentry Support

When youth exit confinement and are reintegrating back into the community, they require a great deal of support. Drawing from research evidence and insights from interviewees, several important reentry strategies surfaced. Reentry planning should begin when youth first enter confinement. A cohesive reentry team should be assembled, composed of a reentry coordinator, a facility education staff member, mental health or substance use treatment professionals if necessary, and a community liaison knowledgeable about community programs and services. This team should also include a transition specialist, who bridges the gap between the facility school and the community's educational institutions and a vocational rehabilitation counselor who assists with postsecondary education or employment for qualifying disabled youth. Students with disabilities between the ages of 16 and 22 who have an IEP, a 504 plan, or a documented disability can benefit from services offered by the California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) that include Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS). These services include job exploration counseling, postsecondary counseling, workplace readiness training, self-advocacy training, and paid work experience.

Community colleges can also play a significant reentry role through programs like Rising Scholars, which can provide staff liaisons to collaborate with student reentry coordinators. This ensures a smooth transition to the college campus and maintains continuity in academic programming. If a youth moves to a less restrictive environment or is released into the community, community college reentry staff should also coordinate with the relevant local community college to facilitate any necessary transition. Some community colleges have even

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[131] Dawson, P., van der Meer, J., Skalicky, J., & Cowley, K. (2014). On the effectiveness of supplemental instruction: A systematic review of supplemental instruction and peer-assisted study sessions literature between 2001 and 2010. *Review of educational research*, 84(4), 609-639.

established Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with neighboring colleges to streamline these transitions.

Beyond the reentry supports listed in Section II, additional measures can ensure a successful transition to college upon release. These include:

- Extensive support in the 30 days prior and 30-60 days post-release, when most complications arise.
- A pre-release furlough coordinated with a campus liaison so that youth can tour the campus and meet faculty. The furlough could also be used by a reentry coordinator to secure a meeting with the youth's family and support network prior to release from confinement to assess housing and other aspects of the youth's living situation.
- Providing a laptop and a monthly stipend to youth.
- Weekly meetings between college coordinators and youth.
- Assistance in connecting youth with all appropriate campus supports.
- Ensuring timely transcript transfers.
- Continuation of reentry support for at least 6-12 months post-release; and
- Assistance in securing housing, employment, and legal aid services.

The most recurrent reentry challenge cited for youth attending community college is affordable housing. Organizations like the Anti-Recidivism Coalition have directly provided housing for reentering students, while some counties have directly funded housing or provided housing vouchers to reentering students.

A Community of Belonging and Campus Integration

Establishing meaningful connections and fostering a sense of community are vital in helping students reintegrating into the community to find their place on a college campus. A significant factor in this process is the role of credible mentors on campus, who understand the multitude of challenges these students have overcome. They can help forge deep connections with students and serve as powerful role models. Coordinators of programs serving formerly incarcerated students should actively foster relationships with key personnel across campus departments, such as financial aid, counseling, admissions, records, and Equal Opportunity Programs (EOPs). When introducing a new student to campus, it's important to ensure a warm, personal welcome from these key individuals. Moreover, coordinators should encourage the growth of mentorship relationships between faculty, staff, and these students, further enriching their experience. To further enhance the student experience, it's recommended that dedicated spaces be established for these students to network and form a community. These spaces can host weekly student meetings and workshops and should provide ample supplies of food. Additionally, the presence of paid peer mentors and reliable

service providers can help connect students to needed services, further supporting their reintegration journey.

Conclusion

Research findings, coupled with insights from sixty-five leaders associated with California's juvenile justice system, provide both a framework and detailed recommendations for establishing higher education pathways for secure treatment youth in the state. Many incarcerated youth hail from disadvantaged backgrounds and have been underserved by educational institutions. Although incarceration can potentially push youth towards further marginalization and criminal activity, it also presents an opportunity to redirect them towards higher education and a stable financial future. Creating effective higher education pathways for these youth presents challenges, but a diverse group of leaders and a committed community for change offer a plethora of innovative ideas to transform youth incarceration into a potentially positive, life-altering experience.

Appendices

Appendix A: Literature Review and Interview Methods

Insights for the findings summarized in this report were drawn from two primary sources:

1. **Literature Scan and Synthesis:** a broad scan of peer-reviewed and grey literature (information produced outside of traditional publishing channels) was used to construct a narrative review for this report. Terms related to the topic, such as "education," "higher education," "college," or "vocational," as well as "confinement," "incarceration," "reentry," or "transition" were used to identify more than 350 articles that were coded and synthesized to produce a narrative framework that encompassed an array of issues facing those seeking to build higher education pathways for youth

experiencing incarceration in California. Within this body of research, further analysis was conducted to identify “proven” interventions that were rigorously evaluated using randomized controlled trials or quasi-experimental designs, as well as “promising” interventions, “best practice” recommendations, and system innovations.

2. **Field Interviews:** A total of 72 semi-structured interviews were conducted with an array of field stakeholders connected to higher education for youth in secure confinement in California. Field interviews were designed to address key issues raised in the research literature as well as how those issues might be relevant to stakeholders in a California context. The range of stakeholders included those who have experienced juvenile confinement and have pursued or completed higher education pathways, instructors in juvenile detention facilities, faculty at colleges and universities, staff and administrators at County Offices of Education, managers of higher education programs targeting youth in juvenile justice facilities, youth justice advocates, researchers, chief probation officers and their staff, staff at district attorneys’ offices, staff at public defenders’ offices, juvenile facility behavioral health specialists, and administrators at the California Department of Juvenile Justice.

Appendix B: National Scan for Program Examples

The following are program examples for creating higher education pathways in juvenile justice institutions. Each example includes a profile of the program model, as well as analyses of outcomes, successes, and barriers gathered through interviews and reviews of documents and materials.

California

California has a burgeoning collection of pathways to higher education for justice-involved youth across the state,[132] including individual programs such as Project Change at the College of San Mateo, networks such as the Rising Scholars Network of community colleges, and multi-campus initiatives such as the Underground Scholars Initiative and Project Change. All of these have created a strong foundation of post-secondary opportunities for currently and previously incarcerated or detained youth.

[132] Community College Programming for Juvenile Justice-Impacted Students

Project Change at the College of San Mateo

Program Overview

Project Change is a program housed in the College of San Mateo that focuses on youth who are currently or have previously been in juvenile hall. It is a two-pronged program, offering credit-bearing, in-person courses to students currently in detention as well as supporting students who have transitioned out of juvenile care and are continuing their education at the College of San Mateo. Project Change predominantly works with youth between the ages of 16 and 25 but also provides resources to justice-impacted students of all ages seeking support on campus.

In the juvenile hall, Project Change runs a cohort-style model, where students enroll in English 105 and other general education classes that provide a foundational education. Classes are run synchronously, though Project Change also supports students to take independent, asynchronous coursework that interests them. One of the most common courses is positive psychology. Most of the program's juvenile hall students are dual enrollment students taking some college-bearing coursework while also finishing their high school degree or equivalent. Because of COVID, the coursework has been online for the past several semesters, but the program will return to completely in-person instruction in the upcoming semester.

Project Change also provides wraparound support for justice-impacted students on campus, including academic support and virtual check-ins. Recognizing that students are more likely to succeed when their basic needs are met, Project Change also provides a $50 transportation stipend and a $50 food stipend per semester to on-campus justice-impacted students with no prerequisites. These stipends are also tied to an incentive program. Students who perform well see their stipend increase to $75/$75, and those with outstanding performance receive $100/$100. The program also supports other basic needs such as paying utility bills on a case-by-case basis. Additionally, Project Change hires previously incarcerated College of San Mateo students as work-study students, paying them $20 per hour to assist with programming in juvenile hall.

Outcomes, Successes, Challenges

Students often struggle to succeed when they do not see themselves as learners, or as people who would go to college or belong in higher ed spaces. Because of this, developing a positive identity related to education is a very important outcome goal for Project Change. In an interview with NICJR, the Program Manager noted that Project Change underscores the importance of creating a “sense of self.” Youth in Project Change are particularly empowered to occupy spaces of privilege and power, as the program creates platforms for students to speak at conferences and participate in policy advocacy in San Mateo and Sacramento.

Most youth in detention have had their education interrupted and are missing foundational knowledge. These students need additional support to successfully finish their high school equivalency, let alone be prepared for college-level coursework. Project Change offers multiple

levels of support to help students succeed. In particular, the juvenile hall itself has an employee who is an accredited teacher to help students with coursework when they are struggling, and the courses that Project Change offers also have embedded tutor support.

Another significant challenge is the cost of housing in the area, which has a notable impact on students' ability to attend San Mateo College. Students either have to live very far away, where housing is cheaper, or work many hours to live locally. Both options require a lot of time out of students' days, which can interfere with coursework. At this time there is not a strong solution to this challenge.

Funding

The political climate in San Mateo has supported the success of this project. Community college in San Mateo is completely free, so Project Change students are not required to pay for enrollment. San Mateo College covers books and supplies as well. Project Change uses external grants to provide students in the hall with laptops, as well as to fund extracurricular and social events such as panels and celebrations.

Website: https://collegeofsanmateo.edu/projectchange/

San Francisco Juvenile Hall

Organization Overview

San Francisco Juvenile Hall (SFJH) is a youth detention center that offers several pathways to higher education. SFJH operates Woodside Learning Center, a high school for detained youth up to age 19 that offers college counseling to prepare students for post-secondary opportunities.[133] Youth over the age of 18 or who have completed high school have the option of attending online college and vocational courses.[134] SFJH partners with three organizations to provide educational programming for college credit and vocational training: City College of San Francisco, iCEV, and Berkeley's Incarceration to College program. While programming varies by provider, in conjunction, these programs provide youth in SFJH with academic counseling, financial aid assistance, peer support / mentoring, tutoring, college and career services, and vocational training.

The City College New Directions Student Support Program supports both current City College students in SFJH as well as students interested in enrolling. A program counselor works with students to discuss enrollment, class selection, courses of study, and accessing academic support.[135] New Directions also works with formerly incarcerated and justice-impacted students transitioning to the City College campus, connect those students to financial aid

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133 Juvenile Hall

134 Ibid.

135 Juvenile Hall Programs

information, tutoring, food pantries, and a plethora of other supports.[136] Additionally, detained students can enroll in online courses at City College.

iCEV is an online vocational program that detained youth can complete at their own pace. This program offers CTE courses in architecture, construction, transportation, manufacturing, business marketing, finance, IT, and family consumer services.[137] iCEV teachers support students who need assistance.

Lastly, Berkeley Underground Scholars (BUS) offers an Incarceration to College (ITC) class to SFJH youth. BUS is an organization housed at UC Berkeley that works to build a "Prison-to-School Pipeline" through outreach initiatives like ITC. ITC is a registered CTE course that prepares students for the landscape of academic and vocational opportunities available to them.[138] The class is held weekly and covers a variety of topics to familiarize youth with college life. The course discusses college applications and financial aid as well as clubs on campus, campus activities, and other non-academic aspects of college life. It also discusses non-academic pathways such as trades, business planning, and reentry resources more generally. Upon completion of the course, BUS works with ITC youth to develop release plans that align with their goals and support them all the way up to college enrollment.[139]

Funding

San Francisco Juvenile Hall receives funding for its education programming from the Justice Realignment Block Grant.[140][141]

Website: https://sf.gov/information/juvenile-hall

Mount Tamalpais College

Program Overview

Mount Tamalpais College (MTC), previously known as the Prison University Project, is a degree-granting liberal arts college housed inside of San Quentin State Prison.[142] MTC grants an Associate of Arts degree to students who complete the program and provides a plethora of

136 New Directions

137 Juvenile Hall Programs

138 Incarceration to College

139 Ibid.

140 Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant Annual Plan

141 Juvenile Probation Department Budget Proposal, FY 2022-23 & FY 2023-24

142 MTC serves adults incarcerated at San Quentin and does not serve youth. However, NICJR felt the model provides key insights into successful higher education pathways for incarcerated students.

college readiness coursework for those who need it. MTC has been operational for 25 years. It recently became an independent accredited institution.

In order to earn the Associate of Arts degree, students must complete 61 semester units, including a set of required courses and four electives. All coursework credits can be transferred to other Associate of Arts degree programs, or even to four-year degree programs, should a student be released and continue to pursue higher education in the community.

Most students begin their studies through MTC's college prep and readiness courses, which include an Introduction to College course focused on soft skills in the context of higher education. Study skills and time management are examples of soft skills covered in the course, but so too is the ability to engage in academic debates in a productive way, especially in a prison context where being vulnerable can be dangerous. Other offerings include foundational English and math courses.

MTC utilizes an in-person, classroom-based model. However, it is not a cohort model; students can take their required coursework at different points in their academic careers. The College also offers study hall sessions multiple times per week where students can receive assistance with their coursework, as well as structured time to complete their course requirements.

Outcomes, Successes, Challenges

MTC is a very popular program within San Quentin. On average, there are 300 students enrolled in the program each semester, and the College consistently has a waitlist of inmates who would like to participate.

Recognizing that issues of identity can be a barrier to student success, MTC really values students being able to imagine themselves as belonging in a college classroom. Through college readiness classes and other supports, staff ensure that students know they are capable of the work as an important first step.

Prison culture and its emotional impact on students can also be barriers to productive student participation. Incarcerated students have complex personal histories that can make issues like heated debates, canceled classes, and poor performance reviews seem like insurmountable obstacles. MTC works to equip students with the soft skills and emotional support needed to navigate these very challenges.

MTC has ongoing student supports built into the program, including mid-semester and end-of-semester conferences to check in with students and ask them how they feel the program is going. These conferences are a key time for students to analyze their own performance and needs as well as to grow their resource management skills. Students are also required to visit tutors and report back to the class on their tutoring experience, allowing them to model to their peers how to ask for help and encouraging them to build relationships with their tutors.

Another key to the College's success and stability has been its very intentional approach to staffing. In particular, MTC leadership has found that the program needs enough staff to create a chain of accountability. This ensures both that students have adequate support at multiple levels and that the College maintains a strong working relationship with the prison and its officers.

Accreditation and the requirements that come with it have further spurred the buildout of MTC staffing and institutional structures, including adding a Chief Operations Officer, staff managers, and other auxiliary positions that bolster student success. MTC is also now required to collect data and provide access to IT and library resources, all of which are invaluable to the growth of both students and the College.

Funding

The program, including tuition and books, is free for students. Students also have access to laptops from the computer lab that they can check out for one to two hours.

MTC has secured a wealth of funding that has allowed it to meet the standards discussed above. The College readily acknowledges that a substantial amount of money and other resources were required to grow into the successful independent accredited school that it is. Notably, the majority of MTC funds come from individual grants and donations. These funds exceed what would be given by a community college or a government agency and allow for a great degree of freedom.

Website: https://www.mttamcollege.edu/

Prison Education Project

Program Overview

The Prison Education Project (PEP) was established in 2011 to expand educational opportunities to incarcerated youth and adults. The goal of the Prison Education Project is to create a "Prison-to-School Pipeline" and provide in-custody students with the cognitive tools necessary to function as productive citizens.[143] PEP works within 25 California correctional facilities, including four youth facilities, to expand education opportunities to incarcerated people.[144] The Project aims to provide students with a foundation for success through academic, life skills, and career development programming.

Inside the facilities, PEP sends both student and faculty volunteers to implement curriculum for incarcerated students. These courses include academic orientation, GED preparation, career development workshops, an interdisciplinary certificate program, and a PEP art

143 Prison Education Project

144 Prison Education Project Facilities

program. The interdisciplinary certificate program in particular offers courses like Psychology, US Economic Policies, and Creative Writing.[145] These courses aim to prepare incarcerated individuals for the academic demands of college-level coursework and inspire them to consider a post-secondary pathway.

The Prison Education Project also runs the Reintegration Academy, which brings 25-30 parolees to a college campus for a 10-week program that immerses them in academic, life skills, and career development modules.[146] The program gives participants a gift card for business attire as well as a laptop computer. At the end of the program, participants are enrolled in Mt. San Antonio Community College.

Outcomes, Successes, and Challenges

PEP is the largest volunteer-based prison education program of its kind in the United States. Since its foundation in 2011, PEP has served approximately 8,000 students in custody with the support of 3,000 university and faculty volunteers.

PEP is predominantly run by student volunteers from colleges local to the correctional facilities. In an article discussing the challenges and success of the program, founder Renford Reese notes that this creates a "reciprocal reflex," where both student volunteers and incarcerated students receive rewards and benefits from participating.[147]

In this same article, Reese notes significant challenges to program delivery. He emphasizes the importance of learning to work within both the academic and correctional institutions' systems of operation, writing, "The goal should be to push the boundaries of the box outward from the inside."[148] At the same time, he recognizes that individual correctional officers or administrators can interrupt program operations and that working in facilities with unsupportive administration can be nearly impossible. For example, he cites instances of officers being adversarial toward a group of volunteers trying to enter a facility, drastically reducing the amount of time they could run the program and undoubtedly impacting volunteer morale.[149] He also cites other instances of guards verbally harassing the volunteers about helping "rapists and pedophiles,"[150] and he notes instances of prison administration harshly reprimanding volunteer faculty and thus harming teacher retention.

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[145] An Evaluation of the Prison Education Project at the California Institution for Women

[146] The Reintegration Academy

[147] "Project Narrative: The Lessons Learned from Implementing the Prison Education Project."

[148] Ibid.

[149] Ibid.

[150] Ibid.

Website: https://www.prisoneducationproject.org/

Multi-Site Networks and Initiatives

Rising Scholars Network

The Rising Scholars Network is a product of California Community Colleges' commitment to serving justice-impacted students.[151] The Network brings together colleges with online and in-person classes for incarcerated students (both youth and adults), as well as those with on-campus supports for formerly incarcerated students, allowing stakeholders to share best practices, institutional successes, and challenges faced in serving this population.[152] The Rising Scholars team advocates for member institutions, builds resources for currently and formerly incarcerated students, and works with corrections partners to find solutions to student and program challenges. The State government has signaled its commitment to justice-impacted students by setting aside $15 million for the Network.

Underground Scholars

Underground Scholars began on the University of California (UC), Berkeley campus in 2013.[153] Since then, seven additional UC campuses across the state have established their own Underground Scholars chapters. These programs broadly serve students who have been impacted by the justice system to build a "Prison to School" pipeline.

Underground Scholars programs focus on recruitment, retention, advocacy, and wellness for system-impacted students of all ages. These programs work with currently or formerly incarcerated youth enrolled in community colleges who are interested in transferring to a UC campus, providing transcript reviews, application support, and counseling. The programs also connect current UC students with resources such as academic tutoring, financial support, healing circles, and wellness stipends.

Berkeley Underground Scholars has also created an Incarceration to College course that is delivered to detained youth in Contra Costa County Hall, Alameda County Juvenile Hall, and San Francisco County Juvenile Hall (detailed below).[154] This curriculum is a certified CTE course, and students receive credit for successful completion. The course discusses campus life, explores various majors, and provides information about the admission process.

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[151] Serving California's Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Community College Students

[152] Ibid.

[153] Underground Scholars Initiative

[154] Incarceration to College

Project Rebound

Project Rebound is a program that supports formerly incarcerated students in enrolling and integrating into the California State University system.[155] Some participating universities also offer services to currently incarcerated youth. The Project Rebound Consortium consists of 14 California State University (CSU) campuses that serve currently or formerly incarcerated students.

Project Rebound offers many services to youth that vary by campus. For example, within the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) Mentorship Program, a team of 12 Project Rebound students from six Project Rebound campuses receive training and are employed to serve as mentors for youth who are recently released or nearing the end of detention in three DJJ correctional facilities.[156] These mentors assist youth both pre- and post-release in completing their college applications, ensuring some continuity of care as they transition back into the community.

At CSU Fresno and Cal State LA, Project Rebound Scholars have the opportunity to serve as paid fellows in the AmeriCorps California Justice Leaders Program, where they work with currently incarcerated or recently released youth to serve as re-entry support counselors. A similar program exists at CSU San Marcos, where participants in the Each One Teach One Mentorship Program work with court adjudicated youth to encourage them to complete high school and explore college opportunities.[157]

Project Rebound at Cal State Fullerton (CSUF) also has several standout programs. Dare 2 Dream targets incarcerated youth in Orange County,[158] providing a comprehensive college orientation curriculum, application advising, and empowerment curricula designed to grow students' interest in post-secondary opportunities. CSUF also runs the John Irwin house, which provides a communal environment with holistic wraparound services and psychosocial supports for Project Rebound students transitioning to higher education.[159]

Florida

[155] Project Rebound

[156] CSU Report: Project Rebound 2022

[157] Ibid.

[158] Dare 2 Dream

[159] Project Rebound

Florida Department of Juvenile Justice

Department Overview

The Florida Department of Education (DOE) is the state's lead agency for juvenile justice education programs, curriculum support services, and resources.[160] DOE and the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (FDJJ) work in conjunction to develop academic and career protocols to guide districts and providers in supporting programming for incarcerated youth.[161] They also train, coordinate, and collaborate with school districts, educational providers, and juvenile justice providers as they implement programming.[162]

Three types of career programming are offered in juvenile facilities. The first involves personal accountability skills and behaviors that support obtaining and retaining employment; the second, exploring and gaining knowledge of occupation options and the level of effort required to achieve them; and the third, obtaining career and industry certifications.[163] Sites in 34 school districts provide some or all of these types of career programming.

Additionally, FDJJ has partnered with Tallahassee Community College to implement a pilot program called Project Anchor that focuses on delivering workforce education and career readiness training to committed and transitioning youth ages 16 and older.[164] Through this project, FDJJ seeks to "ensure that justice-involved youth have a seamless pathway for continuing their education at public state or technical college, securing employment, or enlisting in the armed forces."[165] Direct services provided to youth through the pilot include assessment, career exploration, career training, scholarship/tuition assistance, and industry exam certification.[166] Project Anchor is currently being implemented in 16 sites, with plans to expand incrementally over time.

Outcomes, Successes, Challenges

In the 2021-2022 school year, FDJJ and DOE assisted 94 youth in enrolling in post-secondary institutions, and 143 students received industry certifications.[167] Future efforts by FDJJ will include expanding Project Anchor to additional sites and increasing the range of career opportunities available for incarcerated youth.

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160 Florida Department of Juvenile Justice Office of Education Overview

161 Ibid.

162 Ibid.

163 Florida Department of Juvenile Justice Education Programs Overview

164 Project Anchor

165 Ibid.

166 Ibid.

167 Developing Effective Educational Services in the Department of Juvenile Justice Programs: Annual Report 2021-2022

One significant barrier that FDJJ has encountered is difficulty in integrating educational opportunities and training into the schedules of incarcerated youth, given that they attend behavioral programming during the day.

Funding

District-based education services and Project Anchor programming are state funded. In addition, FDJJ receives federal assistance for post-secondary career opportunities via Perkins funding.

Website: https://www.djj.state.fl.us/services/office-of-education

Maryland

Department of Juvenile Services Juvenile Services Education Program

Program Overview

Through the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) Juvenile Services Education Program (JSEP), the State of Maryland offers a variety of higher education opportunities for youth in their care who are high school graduates. Counselors work with students finishing their high school requirements to decide if they will continue to college coursework, CTE programming, or other career options. Each student is guaranteed a minimum of 2.5 hours of higher education activities per day that are chosen based on their individual needs and goals.[168] These activities may include college placement tests, credit-bearing college courses and vocational education programming through community college partners, a variety of certifications and certificates, or workforce development classes.

Backbone Mountain Youth Center (BMYC) is a DJS site with a particularly strong set of post-secondary opportunities. At BMYC, DJS offers a college program in conjunction with Garrett

[168] Maryland Post-secondary Opportunities Policies and Procedures

College of Maryland. This short-term program requires a preliminary screening process to admit youth. Once selected, youth are admitted for one college semester and earn up to 15 college credits.[169]

Outcomes, Successes, Challenges

Consistent with our findings in other case studies, internet access is crucial to continuity of education and overall course completion within the Maryland system, but providing that access is a significant challenge. Several DJS sites allow youth to enroll in online college courses. However, interruptions in internet access caused by facility lockdowns for COVID or behavioral issues can inhibit students' learning schedules and lead to missed classes.[170]

The transient nature of youth across the system also leads to academic disruptions. For example, a 2021 Juvenile Justice Monitoring report noted that students who had transitioned from one site to another had their college coursework interrupted, and DJS acknowledged that certain sites like Backbone Mountain Youth Center had more built in support for college-enrolled students than other sites.

Funding

DJS uses funding from its state-allocated budget to support youth education. However, funding for college tuition is not included in this budget.

Website: https://djs.maryland.gov/Pages/JSEP/JSEP.aspx

Massachusetts

Massachusetts Department of Youth Services

Department Overview

The Massachusetts Department of Youth Services (DYS) offers several college and post-secondary opportunities for youth under their supervision, working with six higher education institutions to enroll students in Certificate Programs.[171]

The DYS College Program both prepares students for college enrollment and supports them throughout the process. For example, the College Program hosts virtual sessions with college advisors to help students plan for enrollment in a degree program. DYS also engages the

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169 Data Resource Guide Fiscal Year 2022 - Backbone Mountain Youth Center

170 Maryland Juvenile Justice Monitoring Unit Fourth Quarter Report and 2021 Annual Review

171 DYS Programs - Education

parents of their youth to promote higher education opportunities, hosting community engagement workshops about applying for college and completing the FAFSA.

Students also have access to extensive support to successfully complete their secondary education, including English Language Education and a tutoring program. In conjunction with transition services, counselors ensure that any high school coursework students have completed at DYS will transfer and not delay their graduation, which is important to prevent further academic interruptions. These counselors also support students who want to enroll in post-secondary opportunities, depending on the students' career goals. Many DYS high school students pursue dual enrollment and earn college credit while finishing high school.

Outcomes, Successes, Challenges

DYS has been increasing the number of students enrolled in college-level coursework while in detention or incarcerated as well as expanding the selection of courses offered. In 2020, 52 dual-enrolled and matriculated students took 121 college courses.[172] Unfortunately, this upward trend in college level enrollment is not seen among DYS youth who have re-entered the community. Further, while enrollment is rising, persistence of enrollment to a second semester is relatively low.[173]

DYS also has many youth who participate in vocational training. In 2021 alone, the program had 172 youth obtain industry-specific certifications.

Funding

DYS is a state-funded program. Funding for tuition and academic endeavors is covered by the DYS budget.

Website: https://www.mass.gov/service-details/dys-programs-education

Missouri

Missouri Division of Youth Services

Division Overview

The Missouri Division of Youth Services (DYS) is the state's juvenile justice system. DYS is well known for its therapeutic and rehabilitative model to meet the emotional and mental health

[172] DYS Comprehensive Education Partnership Report

[173] Department of Youth Services Education Report, Calendar Year 2020–2021

needs of its youth. DYS emphasizes and supports students pursuing post-secondary education, career and vocational opportunities.

The DYS Jobs Program started over 23 years ago and allows youth to gain important work experience and job skills. Youth enrolled in the program receive minimum wage for their work in addition to employment experience. Participation in the program can also be applied for vocational educational credit.[174]

DYS also has an all-female group home, the Rosa Parks Center, that is housed on a college campus.[175] The Rosa Parks Center is a small, low-security treatment facility with 10 beds located at William Woods University.[176] The Center's location on a college campus gives youth exposure to college life, and it facilitates a relationship between the university, its students, and the youth in treatment. Residents in the facility receive counseling and attend an on-site DYS school.[177] They eat their meals in the college campus dining halls and are able to attend some college activities such as campus tours, giving them structured exposure to explore their own college trajectories.[178] William Woods students in relevant programs like Social Work are able to intern with the Rosa Parks Center. These interns help with group therapy sessions and administrative support,[179] fostering relationships among the residents and college students. The Center also hosts community outreach on campus to expose Woods students to the resources offered at the Rosa Parks Center.

Outcomes, Successes, Challenges

In 2021, 183 youth were served by the DYS Jobs Program, with 100% of students categorized as successful, or able to maintain "participation consistent with employment agencies' philosophies."[180] In addition, around 5% of DYS youth enrolled in post-secondary education or other employment after programming.[181]

It should be noted that the last publicly available DYS Annual Report (for Fiscal Year 2021) indicated that no youth were housed in the Rosa Parks Center as of 6/30/2021.[182] NICJR was unable to confirm whether the Center is currently operational. However, given the creativity of

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174 Missouri Department of Social Services Division of Youth Services Annual Report Fiscal Year 2021

175 William Woods University and the Rosa Parks Center: a beneficial partnership

176 Missouri Department of Social Services Division of Youth Services Annual Report Fiscal Year 2021

177 Missouri's Division of Youth Services Programs and Services

178 Ibid.

179 William Woods University and the Rosa Parks Center: a beneficial partnership

180 Missouri Department of Social Services Division of Youth Services Annual Report Fiscal Year 2021

181 Ibid.

182 Ibid.

this model and its uniqueness relative to the other programs explored in this scan, NICJR determined that the Rosa Parks Center was a valuable inclusion for this report.

Funding

DYS receives funding from Title 1 Part D. For DYS to continue receiving this funding, it must meet specific goals related to improving student performance (such as improving measures on college and career readiness) and improving postsecondary follow up.[183]

Website: https://dss.mo.gov/dys/educational-services.htm

New Jersey

The Center for Justice-Impacted Students

Program Overview

The Center for Justice Impacted Students (CJIS) is run by Middlesex College. CJIS offers credit-bearing coursework for students in Camden County Juvenile Detention Center and Middlesex County Juvenile Detention Center (JDC), where pre-adjudicated youth are detained, as well as for post-adjudicated students in the New Jersey Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC). In the two detention centers, CJIS offers onsite coursework in English, as well as faculty-led workshops in humanities subjects such as philosophy, poetry, and food justice. There are approximately 80 students who participate across the two centers.

For post-adjudicated students in JJC facilities across the state, CJIS recently launched an Associate of Arts (AA) degree pathway. Students take classes online in a cohort-style model; they are enrolled in the same general coursework, take classes synchronously, and progress through the degree at the same pace. Students are also able to take additional independent coursework that interests them. This program currently has two cohorts with 18 students.

CJIS also operates the Justice Scholars Program, which serves any traditional students who have been previously detained or incarcerated at any level (youth or adult facilities) enrolled at Middlesex College. This program links students to wraparound services including housing

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[183] ESSA Plan Title I, Part D: Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk

resources, therapeutic resources, and academic support. The program also works with currently incarcerated students whose release dates are approaching to complete transition planning that includes identifying reentry supports and, if interested, higher educational opportunities along with financial aid assistance and registration support.

These programs developed out of workshops and peer mentorship started by students from Middlesex College that provided comprehensive learning experiences to Middlesex County JDC students.[184] Over time, JDC students expressed interest in taking credit-bearing courses, and eventually the College developed the Justice Scholars Program to provide wraparound support to system-impacted students on campus.[185][186]

CJIS faculty and staff are required to complete trauma-informed workshops prior to engaging in the work. These trainings help faculty and staff better engage with students who have extreme histories of trauma and help them view the program as a form of empowerment for students. After the initial training, faculty and staff attend weekly meetings to review successes and challenges they face. In addition to the faculty, the program is comprised of four staff members (a Director, Program Manager, Program Coordinator, and Success Coach) as well as several work study students from the Justice Scholars Program.

Outcomes, Successes, and Barriers

Programming has had a significant positive impact on students' sense of identity and empowerment. According to the program founder, although 44% of students never thought they would go to college, 88% said they would like to continue, and 100% said it changed how they viewed the world. The AA cohort has higher retention rates than traditional students in Middlesex College, with about 80% retention across semesters.

Institutional support from both Middlesex College and JJC has significantly contributed to the success of the program. For example, Middlesex College IT has worked closely with JJC IT to make technology accessible to the students in juvenile facilities and to adapt to detention-specific limitations such as the inability of detained and incarcerated students to have email addresses. The program founder also credits JJC for their commitment to the AA program, which stems from their recognition that the JJC student population had shifted to include a large number of 19–25-year-olds who were not engaged in programming because they were not of high school age.

One of the largest barriers to student success is the interruptions in education that happen when students transition within the system pre- and post-adjudication or from one facility to another. Further interruptions occur when students who have received disciplinary action are prevented from attending class. All of this can lead to students falling behind and, in some

[184] Center for Justice-Impacted Students: Our History

[185] Residents of Middlesex Juvenile Detention Center Receive Education from Middlesex College

[186] Center for Justice-Impacted Students: Our History

cases, failing to finish a course. In these cases, CJIS works with the student and their social worker to understand what is happening and determine how to properly intervene.

The geographic expanse of the region served has also limited programming. Courses were initially only available via in-person instruction in the juvenile centers that are in proximity to Middlesex College. However, increased availability of online instruction as a result of the pandemic has allowed Middlesex College to reach additional JJC facilities throughout New Jersey. CJIS would love to also offer in-person classes to the JJC cohorts, but this would require substantial resources and coordination to serve JJC sites located across the state. However, there have been some in-person celebrations for JJC participants such as award ceremonies at the end of the academic year.

Funding

CJIS is primarily funded by donations and grants,[187] including state funding received in the form of grants from the New Jersey Governor's Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Committee.[188] CJIS also receives institutional support for program staff from Middlesex College. Texts, supplies, and tuition for credit-bearing courses for students in the JDC programs are paid for by funds from both sources. For JJC students in the AA pathway, JJC itself pays for tuition and provides technology and all necessary supplies. In both situations, students are not financially responsible.

Website: https://www.middlesexcc.edu/cjis/

Oregon

Oregon Youth Authority

Agency Overview

The Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) is the Oregon State agency responsible for justice-impacted youth. There are nine juvenile facilities across the state, each of which has an accredited high school on site. These facilities also all offer programming for youth to pursue post-secondary education or vocational training. OYA works in conjunction with the Department of Education (DOE) to coordinate both college and vocational opportunities through contracts with local community colleges and vocational programs.

OYA offers support for students to identify and pursue their post-secondary trajectory, whether it be continuing on to college education or pursuing vocational opportunities. Most

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187 Center for Justice-Impacted Students: Support Us

188 Residents of Middlesex Juvenile Detention Center Receive Education from Middlesex College

sites have graduation coaches and/or other staff facilitating students' access to college. These staff are also available to help students identify resources to support academic success once they have enrolled, for example helping students make office hour appointments with their online professors.

OYA offers a small number of in-person, college-bearing coursework at the juvenile facilities. OYA and DOE contract with local community colleges to offer these 100-level courses, which often include English, creative writing, and other courses that can engage students who might not otherwise consider college coursework. Students are also able to pursue a degree through online coursework, and they are allowed to dually enroll in both in-person and online courses.

The Authority also works with the DOE to offer contracted vocational certification classes for incarcerated youth. OYA ensures that the vocational training offered results in industry-accepted certifications that will be functional when students return to the community. Vocational offerings also include pre-apprenticeships in welding, firefighting, barbering, and other fields, as well as a full apprenticeship program for electricians.

The juvenile facilities all have "college labs" that house the technology for youth attending college. These labs may include desks and school materials where students can work as well as computer kiosks so that students may attend online classes and complete their coursework. Some labs also allow students to check out laptops to complete work outside of lab hours.

Outcomes, Successes, Barriers

As the age of the youth population under OYA care includes people up to 25 years old, it is important to the Authority to engage post-high school youth in some form of career trajectory. OYA's primary desired outcome is to support youth in developing an identity around education that they might not have had when they were admitted to a juvenile facility. To this end, OYA encourages any student who is approaching the completion of their high school degree to enroll in college programming. The goal is for these students to determine through experience whether post-secondary education is the path they wish to pursue. However, OYA ultimately aims to support students in whatever path they choose whether educational or vocational.

The Authority has had many students complete post-secondary degrees independently while incarcerated, including Associate of Arts, Bachelor, and even Master degrees. This has required consistent investment on OYA's part to ensure that students have access to the technology they need to complete their coursework, without accessing content that is prohibited by the facilities (social media, illegal media streaming, etc.). Because much of the learning is independent, lack of preparation for self-directed learning can be a barrier to students successfully completing coursework. Students enter juvenile facilities with varying levels of educational preparation. Further, a lack of soft skills such as time management can significantly hinder educational progress in a correctional setting where the student is expected to meet academic requirements in the small windows of time when they do not have other obligations.

Current staffing shortages at multiple levels have also impacted student learning, including a vacancy in the Statewide Education Coordinator position responsible for managing the moving parts between all facilities run by OYA, the DOE and its contracts, the community colleges, and the vocational programs. Staffing challenges in some college labs also impacts student access to the necessary resources to complete their coursework.

Funding

Students who are enrolled in online programs are responsible for their own educational expenses, but they do have free access to school supplies and the technology needed to complete online coursework. Students receive assistance to apply for Pell grants or institutional financial aid. Their families are expected to cover any remaining balance. In rare cases, OYA has some educational funds that can help bridge the gap between a student's needs and their resources.

Students who participate in on-site college coursework and vocational programs have no financial responsibility. The State of Oregon allocates an annual operating budget for OYA, from which OYA provides vocational and secondary education funds to each site. These budgets pay for the contracted classes from the local community colleges and vocational providers.

Website: https://www.oregon.gov/oya/pages/default.aspx

Texas

Texas Juvenile Justice Department

Department Overview

Created in December 2011, the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) operates year-round educational programs for incarcerated youth ages 10–19 and executes memoranda of understanding with local school districts to provide formal education.[189] TJJD operates in the Evins Regional Juvenile Center, Gainesville State School, Giddings State School, McLennan County Juvenile Correctional Facility, and Ron Jackson State Juvenile Correctional Complex.[190] On average, there are approximately 600 students total across these sites.

TJJD's educational programming focuses on college preparation, college enrollment, and earning college credits. The Department offers incarcerated youth access to onsite courses through community college partnerships as well as vocational opportunities. In particular, TJJD

189 Texas Juvenile Justice Department Educational Program

190 TJJD Facilities Address List

offers college courses through Blinn Community College (US History, Government, and English), including dual credit courses. In addition to college coursework, TJJD offers academic counseling, the Test of Adult Basic Education, college testing, and career prep.

TJJD offers holistic services to support youth, including behavioral counseling, mental health support, and special education services. Holistic services are essential to students' educational success, given that over 80% of students are below grade level for reading and math–delays that are further compounded by previous trauma, poverty, mental health challenges, drugs, gangs, and familial issues.

TJJD works to ensure that students receive the instructional and wrap-around resources they need to earn college credit and vocational experience by employing nearly 200 TJJD educational staff. Teachers, counselors, diagnosticians, special education coordinators, principals, and superintendents all play primary roles in ensuring that the youth can focus on their studies with minimal barriers and the supports needed to succeed.

Outcomes, Successes, Challenges

Between 2018–2022, TJJD helped 5,418 youth to earn industry certifications (815), supplemental certifications (453), college credits (60), dual welding course credits (38.5), high school diplomas (134), and GEDs (416). Moving forward, TJJD plans to secure additional college partners and focus more on trauma-informed care in proposed smaller facilities to meet students' needs.

In recent years, TJJD has faced significant challenges with teacher and staff shortages due to COVID. More crucially, every two years, TJJD faces the possibility of its programming ending due to legislative review. However, TJJD has begun to garner increased political and financial support.

Funding

Funding for TJJD programming comes from general revenue funds, Title 1-Part D, Title 2, iDEA-B, and Perkins funding. Title 1 funds are based on the number of youth in the facilities. Title 2 funding supports teacher development, which is similarly dependent on the number of educators running the programming at TJJD. TJJD does not charge tuition.

Website: http://www.tjjd.texas.gov/index.php/education-services#conclusion

Utah

Higher Education for Incarcerated Youth Program

Program Overview

Utah's Higher Education for Incarcerated Youth Program is a virtual, credit-bearing program designed specifically for incarcerated youth that was launched in May 2022. This state-sponsored program is operated by Utah Tech and free to all incarcerated youth. Since its launch, the program has served hundreds of participants across five facilities, with an average stay of nine months per participant.[191]

The program provides incarcerated students with opportunities for concurrent enrollment courses (for students who are in grades 9–12 and in need of high school credits); a consistent, two-year, flexible schedule of higher education courses; a pathway for students to earn college credits that can be applied toward an Associate or Bachelor degree and that satisfy scholarship requirements; and advisory support in their college and career path.[192]

Once students pass an initial screening test, they are eligible to enroll in courses taught by professors from Utah Tech University, Brigham University, Weber University, and Southern Utah University.[193] Credits earned through the program can be transferred to other institutions nationwide.[194] Learning takes place both in person and virtually.

Outcomes, Successes, Challenges

State legislative support for this endeavor has allowed for both funding and operational support across academic institutions to provide college courses tailored to the needs of incarcerated youth.

Students have expressed that the programming has changed their perceptions of their identities, with one student saying he never thought he would be in a college course, and others noting that participation has generally increased their academic expectations.[195]

The program is fairly popular among students. Around 50% of Utah's incarcerated youth population is enrolled in coursework.[196] To date, students have earned around 539 credits in English, criminal justice, biology, political science, philosophy, art, economics, finance, and music.[197] Students generally have high academic achievement, with an average GPA of 3.16 and

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191 College Courses Show Benefits for Incarcerated Youth in UT

192 H.B. 279 Higher Education for Incarcerated Youth

193 Utah Offers "Free College for All" to Juveniles Behind Bars

194 Ibid.

195 Utah Tech program creates opportunities for incarcerated youth

196 Ibid.

197 Ibid.

professors reporting that they are very engaged in the coursework.[198] Several students are close to earning their General Education certificates, which are transferable to other universities.[199]

Funding

Utah's education programming is funded by an annual $300,000 state appropriation that allows participants to take classes for free.[200]

Website: https://le.utah.gov/~2021/bills/static/HB0279.html

Washington, DC

Washington, DC Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services

Department Overview

The Washington, DC Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) is the District of Columbia's juvenile justice agency. DYRS operates a youth detention facility, the Youth Services Center (YSC); a long-term residential facility, the New Beginnings Youth Development Center; and two community-based Achievement Centers. DYRS is also responsible for youth under supervision who have been placed in the community.

Whether a DYRS youth is in a secure facility, a residential center, or in the community, the Department provides extensive support for students interested in or pursuing their post-secondary education. This support includes assisting students with admissions and financial aid applications, special education documentation (IEPs), and direct financial support, depending on Department funding availability.

The Education Office within DYRS partners with the Maya Angelou Academy (MAA) charter school to provide quality education through high school graduation to youth in both facilities. Together, they provide multiple pathways to post-secondary opportunities for those who have already graduated.[201,202] DYRS offers college coursework to youth in the New Beginnings Youth

198 Ibid.

199 Ibid.

200 Utah Offers "Free College for All" to Juveniles Behind Bars

201 Maya Angelou Academy @ Youth Services Center

202 Maya Angelou Academy @ New Beginnings

Development Center as well as support for all post-secondary youth under its supervision to pursue higher education. This support includes college enrollment guidance, academic assistance, and referrals for college support within the community.[203]

Students housed in both YSC and New Beginnings are able to enroll in virtual college coursework. At New Beginnings, DYRS works with the University of the District of Columbia Community College (UDC) to provide cohort-style, credit-bearing virtual classes to youth in the Center. All youth are enrolled in the same coursework and take class synchronously in the New Beginnings auditorium. Students in YSC are also able to enroll in virtual college coursework at UDC but do so independently with support from MAA staff.

The Maya Angelou Academy offers significant support for youth in both facilities who are pursuing post-secondary education. MAA offers SAT preparatory classes for students at New Beginnings who wish to apply to college.[204] MAA also supports students currently enrolled in college coursework in both facilities. At YSC, this includes helping students to enroll in appropriate coursework, virtually log into their college classes, and complete their assignments. At New Beginnings, MAA supervises the UDC cohort students while they are in class and provides study halls and academic assistance to complete their coursework.

For students choosing to pursue career and technical education, the DYRS Division of Academics, Career, and Post-Committed Services offers extensive employment and career preparation programs.[205] This division coordinates with potential employers to ensure that students have the required trainings and foundational skills to pursue career pathways.[206]

DYRS uses a positive youth development framework and provides wraparound services for its youth. The Achievement Center provides a variety of supports, resources, and pro-social opportunities. Some of these services target post-secondary opportunities such as entrepreneurship training, apprenticeships and internships, work readiness and job placement, and vocational skills training.[207] The Education Office also provides financial rewards to encourage academic achievement while students are enrolled in a vocational program or college/university.[208]

Outcomes, Successes, Challenges

DYRS has been enrolling students in both two-year colleges and four-year universities since 2012. This is notable because most other programs investigated focus only on two-year

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[203] Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services: Education

[204] https://dyrs.dc.gov/service/maya-angelou-academy-new-beginnings

[205] Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services: Academics, Career & Post-Committed Services

[206] Ibid.

[207] Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services: The Achievement Centers

[208] Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services: Education

programs. Students have enrolled in colleges such as Delaware State University and West Virginia University.[209]

DYRS' contract with the Maya Angelou Academy facilitates resource sharing while also ensuring adequate staffing and diffuse responsibility for student success. For example, MAA staff provide significant practical support to students in college-level coursework, while DYRS provides financial and structural support (e.g., facilities and supplies) to students enrolling. Contracting with a third-party school also ensures high quality education. The Maya Angelou Academy is highly regarded by both the academic community and DC for its successful service to underserved communities. The fact that MAA was already a developed academic program when contracted by DYRS ensured expertise at the program's onset.

Funding

Students are largely responsible for their own post-secondary educational expenses, however, depending on funding availability, the Department's direct support can be significant. DYRS provides extensive support for incidentals such as clothing, bedding, and other items needed to set up dorm rooms for out-of-state schooling. The Department also connects students with the Jerry M. College Support Scholarship, which "assists committed and post-committed youth with vocational or college/university tuition expenses."[210]

Website: https://dyrs.dc.gov

[209] The DYRS Approach: Education

[210] Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services: Education