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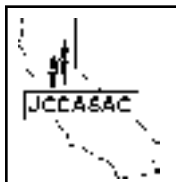
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## Message from the Editorial Board

**A**s we come to the end of another year of great change, we need to again reflect upon our purpose and our place in education. New federal guidelines are asking all schools to “leave no child behind,” yet that has been the mission of court, community, and alternative schools from the outset. Our programs have been struggling to meet the challenge of teaching underprepared students to meet high standards, while doing so with few resources.

All schools are now being called upon to eliminate student failure. This places alternative education programs in the unique position of becoming a model for change. Our programs have had success with the students that other schools have been unwilling or unable to educate. We are identifying new ways of accelerating literacy achievement and mastery of content standards.

We have included in this issue articles that demonstrate

the many ways our work can be used as a catalyst for change, as well as some that offer new ways to think about making program changes, overcoming challenges, examining data and enhancing curricula. In addition, we have included descriptions of innovative programs and student success stories.

We hope you enjoy this edition of *The Journal*.

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Serving as a Committee to the  
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## Message from the President



**Jeanne Hughes**

Director,  
Kern County Office of Education

Greetings JCCASAC members:

I am pleased to have served as president of this organization for the past year. As our nation struggles with conflict abroad, we face many challenges locally, including the state budget crisis and strict new federal guidelines. We are again faced with the pressure to find ways to serve students better with fewer resources.

The struggle in the Middle East occupies our thoughts. Many have loved ones and former students who serve our country. We are proud of their contributions to freedom. In spite of the distraction, I am sure we will be able to stay focused on the task at hand.

The state budget crisis has left many of us wondering about the fate of our programs. We are considering the implications of block grants and districts taking back programs. Some counties are fearful of shrinking programs while

others are gearing up for increased populations as districts look for other programs to serve their most challenging students. But we all share a mutual interest in looking at new ways of enriching our programs and the services we can bring to our students.

The new federal guidelines provide a framework to ensure that 1) all students reach high standards in reading and math, 2) all limited-English proficient students raise proficiency in reading, 3) all students are taught by highly qualified teachers, 4) schools are safe and drug-free, and 5) all students graduate from high school. Its name, No Child Left Behind, echoes the mantra from alternative educators who remind general educators that all students need a quality education and equal opportunities to succeed. With this framework come new responsibilities, including a plan for meeting these goals and establishment of Annual Yearly Progress.

My message to alternative educators this year is to be proactive and stay focused. Be proactive for our students and stay focused on their needs. It is common to want to react to the "business end" of education and let that distract us from our goal. But, alternative educators, by design, are resilient and therefore are used to responding quickly to crisis situations and changing as needed. Keep your focus on excellence, hiring the right staff who have the skills to work with our students with that magic combination of compassion and toughness. JCCASAC can help with that by providing a forum for comparing, questioning, discussing, and revising your current plans to manage a tight budget while serving the most challenging student population in your county. Thank you for being part of the big picture to improve the educational lives of alternative education students.

## Message from the President-Elect



**Jacqueline Flowers**  
Assistant Superintendent,  
San Joaquin County Office of Education

Greetings JCCASAC colleagues:

**T**hank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as President-Elect of the Juvenile Court Community and Alternative School Administrators of California (JCCASAC). It has been a year of learning, sharing, decision making, problem solving, and collaboration with other members of our professional organization, always with improved student achievement in mind. The pace quickens as I move into the president's role in May 2003.

The challenges facing alternative education are greater than at any other time in the history of our organization. Among the many requirements we now face, we must deal with massive budget cuts, implementation of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, development of a single site plan to align with the Local Education Agency Plan (LEAP) and the School Accountability Report Card (SARC), compliance reviews, accreditation, standards-based reform, alternative accountability,

the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE), and the California English Language Development Test (CELDT). Yet, with all of these new mandates, many of which may seem redundant, our charge remains the same. We are asked to serve the most at-risk and least-prepared students, who either cannot or will not be served in their district of residence. The question is, and will continue to be: How do we meet the various needs of a diverse and transient population, while fulfilling the requirements of the federal and state mandates placed on alternative education?

Clearly, these times call for us as educators in alternative education to present a strong, united front with active participation and representation in matters affecting our student population. This means having an awareness of the issues and being part of the decision-making process. I believe that the best way to do this is to become actively involved in JCCASAC. From the largest county to the smallest, the organization is here to assist in every possible

aspect of running a court or community school. No administrator need ever feel isolated or unable to work through a problem, because help is a mere phone call or email away. Communicate regularly with your superintendent. Have a voice in matters that go before the Student Programs and Services Steering Committee. Communicate with members of the JCCASAC Executive Board, and volunteer to serve on committees within the organization. The networking possibilities are endless, and they are invaluable as we work through student issues that affect us all.

Together we can weather the storm and chart the path for student success. Although times are tough, the state budget crisis could actually be a window of opportunity for growth in community schools, primarily because some districts may have to eliminate their existing alternative programs. We must be ready, stay both informed and connected, and continue to do the right thing for our students.

# The Growth of Alternative Education in Orange County

Ted Price, Ph.D.

Lynne Robertson

**We live in the postmodern world, where everything is possible and almost nothing is certain (Havel, 1994).**

In the world of education, however, one thing is certain; Alternative Education (AE) programs are growing. AE programs can consist of structurally separate schools, programs, learning centers, "schools within schools," along with new strategies for learning. The new programs and learning strategies such as contract learning and/or a personalized system of instruction (PSI) are helping to capture a greater percentage of the traditional student population. In Orange County (OC), California, the growth of AE has been dramatic - AE is no longer considered a small, specialized subgroup of teachers or programs, but rather a major player in the delivery of services to part of the county's 500,000+ K-12 population. In fact, in OC, more students attend Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) AE programs (currently over 8,000 students daily) than those who attend all the continuation high schools (22) in the county (combined student population 6,500). Continuation high schools have traditionally been the school of choice for at-risk youth within the school district. As student needs within the at-risk population have increased, other,

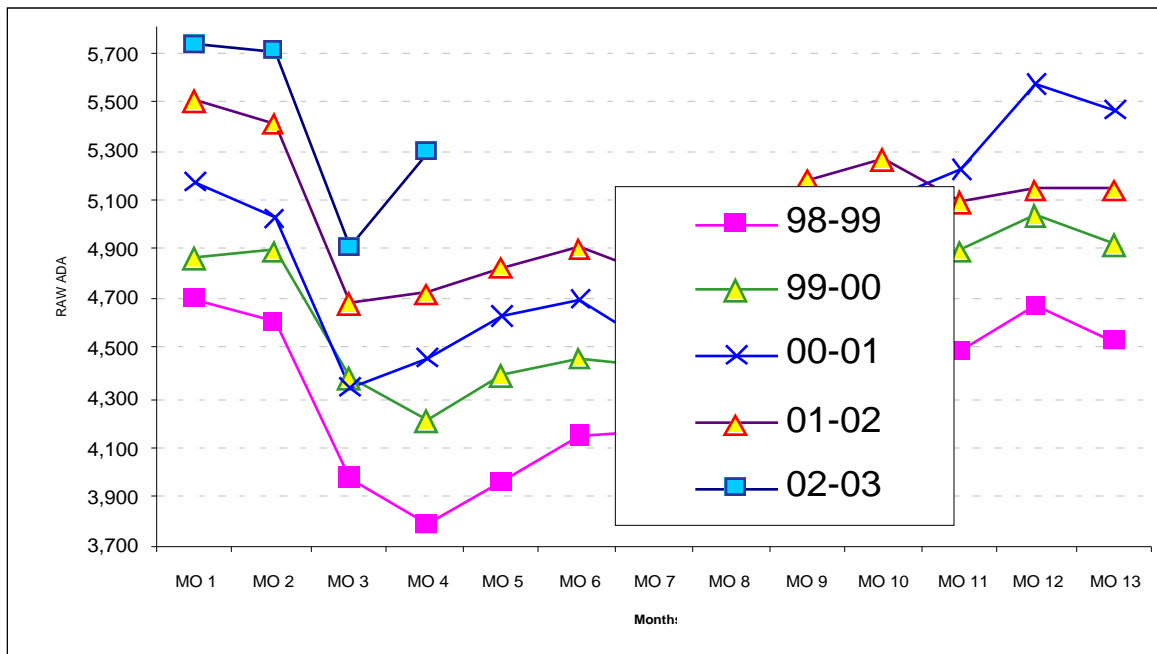
more suitable placements with a different orientation (i.e., AE deals only with AE students) and service delivery model (e.g., students have various options on times of attendance) have become necessary. AE programs have that different orientation and service delivery model.

How dramatic has the growth of AE programs been in Orange County? Table I shows the number of students served over a five-year period in the programs for at-risk youth operated by OCDE (OCDE<sup>2</sup>, 2002). As is noted, the growth curve has been consistently up as the numbers of students served continue to increase. The growth illustrated on the chart is as follows: At the start of the 1998-1999 school year, the student population was approximately 4,700. By 2002-2003, raw ADA numbers had increased to 5,700, and growth continued. The sharp increase in Month 4 in the current school year also gives an indication of the growth that is likely to be sustained throughout the rest of this school year. In 2001-2002, all totaled, OCDE AE programs served over 25,500 students (duplicated count); Average Daily Attendance (ADA) increased by four percent over 2000-2001, for a total ADA of 8,779 vs. 4,700 students in 1998-99. The students served attended school in AE programs at 135 sites (in 1995, there were approximately

37 sites delivering services to referred students).

The principal reasons for growth in Orange County have been: 1) The number of referrals to county-operated programs from Probation and local school districts has increased and, as a result, new program options have been added to meet students' needs, 2) AE has developed partnerships with local districts and other public agencies to expand the options available for at-risk learners throughout the county, and 3) AE programs have become a model for what works for at-risk youth and, as a result, more students have been referred to and are attending county programs where they are experiencing school success.

AE programs are providing critical elements that traditional education cannot or does not provide, as it is not their primary focus. Some of the critical elements AE provides are individualized learning, including daily assessments to determine success in learning; offering materials at the appropriate age level keyed to ensuring daily progress; flexibility to work at the student's own pace; smaller learning communities, along with lower student-teacher ratios that foster an increased sense of connection with a caring adult that results in a greater commitment and a feeling of belonging to



Raw ADA (Actuals) Yearly Comparative Chart  
 Juvenile Court Schools and Community Schools (Excluding Charter School)  
 1998-2003 Formula: Apportionment/No. of Instructional Days

the AE school program; committed and experienced teachers who are dedicated to working with the hardest to teach; and increased counseling and support services to deal with emotional and behavioral issues while also building students' expectations of academic success (Hartzler, 2002).

### AE programs as an option

AE programs have three instruction-based components that, when appropriately addressed, ensure success for all students:

**A. Student programming considers the learning needs of the "whole" student.**

**B. Student needs drive the learning and teaching process.**

**C. Innovative, research-based teaching strategies.**

**A. Student programming considers the learning needs of the "whole" student.** Research has shown that long-term meaningful learning encompasses the following:

It is actively creative; meaning is constantly constructed and reconstructed by the learner. It is experiential and interactive in nature. It is always linked to emotions - there is always an emotional component to learning. It occurs directly and indirectly. It is maximized by challenge and inhibited by threat. It is handicapped by overemphasis on rote memory. It is enhanced by meaningful, relevant, and interesting real-life experiences and activities that consider the needs and interests of the whole person (Caine, 1994).

Such a learning process is easier to facilitate in AE programs. How

does this occur in AE? Educators know that very young students need small schools to develop a sense of self-confidence, yet, for some reason, we seem to think that once a student gets to the middle grades and beyond - a time that encompasses all the confusion and turbulence of adolescence - older students don't need as much support. This myth gets perpetuated in our high schools. Dropouts confirm that a lack of understanding on the part of teachers in the traditional school environment leads to a feeling of alienation. Students who become alienated early in the education process become more so in junior high and usually remain that way through high school, if they don't drop out altogether (DeBlois, 2000). AE programs consider the "whole" student's needs at every level of schooling and can help to ensure school success by engaging and involving students in every aspect of their own learning process.

**B. Student needs drive the learning and teaching process.** Because each learner is unique, we need many shapes, sizes, formats, and packages of curriculum to successfully appeal to each one (Jensen, 2000). Effective AE programs meet student needs by:

- being responsive to learning and instructional style differences;
- ensuring low rates of violence, vandalism, and antisocial behavior on campus because of the size of most AE school sites;
- offering small class sizes, thus ensuring personal relationships with each student;
- establishing a learning process of instruction, coaching, practice, and independence that is monitored daily with each assignment; and
- promoting the positive advantages of being a school of “choice.”

Most all AE students are in AE programs because they want to be there, and if not on day one, certainly within a few weeks.

**C. Students experience educational success.** Experts say few educators are utilizing the research to change the way they teach (Hoff, 2000), but good AE programs/teachers are using research-based evidence of effectiveness in innovative ways of teaching, making learning more interesting, helping students perceive education as valuable and relevant, and letting successful achievement drive the learning process. Students who have had difficulty in traditional education programs begin to re-engage, to learn, to achieve greater academic and behavioral success, and to enjoy the learning environment and process. In a 2001 survey of graduating seniors, 94 percent of graduating seniors reported that their AE program helped them improve the quality of their life, 86 percent said their teacher(s) helped

them set career goals, 64 percent believe that student behavior is better in AE schools than in traditional schools, 58 percent plan to continue a community college after graduation, and 56 percent say they enjoy school more since attending an AE school (OCDE<sup>1</sup>, 2002).

### **AE as a partner with traditional education**

**A. Extend public education to serve all students effectively – “no one drops out” is the goal.**

**B. AE creates options that traditional schools can’t or don’t offer.**

**C. Collaborative learning is based on sharing and transferring student information.**

**A. Extend public education to serve all students effectively – “no one drops out” is the goal.** In line with the national goal of the “No Child Left Behind Act” (NCLB), AE successes in dealing with at-risk students could help strengthen the traditional education program and ensure a program option for all students. As one example of how programs in AE differ, consider the following: action research conducted in alternative settings has indicated that such key elements as family participation, cultural sensitivity, and refusal skills help students to stay substance-free (Adair, 2000). Traditional schools, with their emphasis on core academics and test scores, face a difficult challenge in incorporating practices such as those noted above within their current programs.

**B. AE creates options that traditional schools can’t or don’t offer.**

The Rand Corporation issued a report stating, “Substantial improvement in educational outcomes can be obtained only

through a vastly different form of education” (Hart, 1983); the stage is set for something dramatically different. AE, with its different setting, teaching, and learning strategies, may be one viable option as a place to do and be something different, especially for at-risk learners. Those different options and aspects of a good AE program are mentioned throughout this article.

**C. Collaborative learning is based on sharing and transferring student information, as well as improving, practicing, sharing, and transferring learning and teaching skills (Digenti, 1999).** In design and implementation, AE incorporates collaborative learning with partners to develop teaching and learning skills that facilitate students’ success in multiple environments. Because many AE programs are small, opportunities for increased communication between teachers, community members, and partners are available. The twin desires to provide options for different kinds of schooling and to better serve students with at-risk needs are not only resulting in more AE programs but have also served to drive an increase in charter schools across the country, according to a report released in early February 2000 by the U.S. Department of Education (Bowman, 2000). If we want to hold on to our students, more public school AE options are needed, and needed quickly.

### **AE programs serve as a model of what works**

**A. Prepare students for vocational success.**

**B. Demonstrate academic achievement.**

**C. Demonstrate meaningful changes in education.**



**A. Prepare students for vocational success.** AE programs prepare students for much more than a score on a standardized test. Employers want trustworthy employees who care about the work they do, who finish tasks, are self-starters, show initiative, can define problems, are able to write and think clearly, and who work cooperatively in teams (Mumane, 2000). AE programs, because of their size, are able to focus on behavior management and acquisition of appropriate socialization skills in addition to the skills required in a standards-based curriculum.

**B. Demonstrate academic achievement.** AE programs demonstrate academic success with heretofore difficult, dropout, or at-risk students. AE students stay in school (many of our students have histories of truancy and non-attendance). Attendance with achievement proves that changes in the school and instructional models have enabled AE teachers to reach the most difficult to teach. For example, at the end of the 2001-02 school year, 1,309 AE students in Orange County received a high school diploma. This was a seven percent increase over the previous year and a 120 percent increase from four years ago (OCDE<sup>1</sup>, 2002). AE programs in OC have turned former dropouts into graduates.

**C. Demonstrate meaningful changes in education.** AE can serve as a change agent by demonstrating what works for at-risk students. A personalized relationship between student and teacher in a flexible learning environment has been the perfect proving ground for improved educational practice. With a new vision of schooling (we will provide whatever it takes to ensure that students succeed), staff commitment, action research, effective instruction, and collaborative practices, AE pro-

grams have become model schools for at-risk youth. To further understand the key components of the AE change process, please consider how AE schools have evolved.

*First, consider creating a new school vision.* Our County Superintendent of Schools, Bill Habermehl, is a strong proponent of AE programs. His vision of a world-class education, where all students succeed, has served as the beacon for creating AE programs to meet student needs in OC. In addition, in OC, AE occurs best apart from the traditional school environment and utilizes a methodology that emphasizes more than a teacher and a textbook as the focal point of instruction.

*Second, find staff who will commit to a change in teaching approaches.* Teachers drawn to AE are more inclined to adjust methodologies and adopt more resourceful and non-traditional approaches when students aren't succeeding. Teachers in AE do whatever it takes to ensure that students learn. In AE, if the student has not learned, the teacher hasn't taught.

*Third, try different approaches... believe all students can learn.* Utilize an action research model. Many educators fail to keep current (Price, 1997). A persistent process of action research (in comparing what is known with what is done, changes and improvement can occur), self-evaluation (utilizing consultants and other professionals to help objectively survey current conditions can lead to self-improvement), and opportunities to share research findings (through presentations and conferences), have resulted in new and innovative ideas and methodologies placed into practice. AE is a great laboratory for discovering what works with the most difficult to teach.

*Fourth, consider alternative methods of student learning.* Awareness of individual differences in learning styles has caused educators to intently scrutinize

teaching methods, motives, and content. Extraordinary levels of achievement require making and sustaining multiple changes that focus directly on improving the daily instructional lives of students (Calweli, 2000). For students to learn, we have to understand how students learn. Certainly, a "one-size-fits-all" model doesn't fit everyone.

*Fifth, do more "real" collaborating.* In Orange County, parents, social services, probation officers, justice commissions, police departments, psychologists, mentors, community college representatives, and others are working together. And working together means more than just sharing information. Real collaboration is sharing resources. For instance, our county probation department has purchased computer labs for several sites. Our local police department provides added drive-by security at some sites. Our court system is invested in hiring an advocate to protect students' educational rights. These are just three examples of real collaboration, real partnerships. As a collaborator with many public agencies and school districts, AE can be a model for serving every student. AE can also become a community broker of services that provide necessary resources to ensure success for every student.

## Summary

OCDE programs have not eliminated failure for all students, but re-evaluation and adjustment of AE school programs have increased the probability of student success for at-risk youth in OC. AE has experienced more than a 70% success rate with our referred students (students who would have been dropouts). And by success, we mean that approximately 70 percent of our referred students have returned to traditional district programs or graduated. The county-wide school

dropout rate of 1.7% can further attest to the success and therefore addition of AE program options in Orange County. AE can help bridge the gap between academic failure and success and between alternative behavioral adjustments or removal and/or dropping out. AE programs enable more students to achieve to their potential and slow the disengagement of those who have fallen behind (Hartzler, 2002).

AE is no longer confined to the narrow margin of off-site institutions for off-track students -- it offers re-engagement, remediation, and new skill-learning for many of those who have not succeeded in the traditional system. As alternative programs and their students'

successes have grown, so has research documenting and supporting AE as the effectual approach to learning.

Armed with new insights into brain function, learning styles, and alternative ways of learning, educators can help all children and adolescents develop their strengths while overcoming the negative effects of their weaknesses (Levine, 2002). AE programs are on the cutting edge of becoming just such schools. Student individuality and the value of customized learning must be understood and implemented. To not effectively serve the educational needs of an evolving multicultural society, a diverse group of learners (who could very

well be more "at-risk" in a traditional classroom) and students at greatest risk of dropping out would be unfortunate given the options that AE provides. Fully implementing high standards for all students and developing the skills, will, and discipline of internal accountability in schools are the paths to get us there (Olsen, 2000). In the education reform movement of today, AE as a provider, partner, and change agent, is growing in stature as a result of students who have demonstrated success. AE in Orange County is helping to lead the way in showcasing how to serve every student successfully and, as such, AE is likely to continue to grow in the number of programs offered and in the number of students served.

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**Lynne Robertson**, a graduate of California State University at Long Beach, is a Senior Department Secretary in the Alternative Education Division of the OCDE and co-author of several articles on corrective education.

# The Carnegie Unit and School Reform

Heidi Nickel

Frank has earned 40 credits in English, reads at the fourth-grade level, and consistently scores below the 25th percentile on standardized tests in language arts. Susan has also earned 40 credits in English, takes advanced placement courses, has won numerous writing awards, and will graduate this year with honors in English. Each of the students has earned the same number of high school credits, yet their skill levels are far apart.

Credits are a measure of the number of hours students have been exposed to specific subjects. Originally called Carnegie units, credits were implemented to streamline the university and college admissions process. High schools were able to prove to universities and colleges that their students met admissions requirements because they completed a specified number of hours of schooling. This credit system has become a national practice; consequently, it has created inequity in education, and has made it virtually impossible for secondary schools to implement reforms.

The Carnegie unit was introduced to the world of secondary and post-secondary education in 1914 (Jantzie, 1998). Andrew Carnegie was a philanthropist who earned his fortune in the steel industry and donated much of it to educational causes. He established the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, which created the unit "...to standardize the admissions standards for those colleges seeking to participate in a pension plan sponsored by the

Carnegie Foundation..." (p.1). "...[I]f a college did not meet the requirements, it would not receive retirement allowances for its professors. Because few colleges at the time had their own pensions or annuity funds, the unit was accepted in colleges in an amazingly short period of time" (SCH Advisory Committee, 2001, p.3). The incentive to adopt the Carnegie unit as a standard of admission was purely financial and void of academic consideration.

The Carnegie unit was not only a financial incentive, but it was an appropriate tool for educational institutions during the Industrial era. Factories needed workers who could listen to instructions, absorb bits of isolated information, and regurgitate those bits of information when necessary.

A factory assembly-line model for schools made sense in this context. ...the mode of instruction, whereby those with the information organized it and delivered it to students who needed to absorb it, was also a natural fit (Caine and Caine, 1997, p.3).

The traditional high school system emerged as a result of this industrial model. Skills, philosophies, and theories were compartmentalized into neatly packaged subject areas. Teachers collected and disseminated information to the students, and the students memorized it.

This model of education was not successful for many students. "When viewing the system as a whole, that many people fell through the cracks did not seem to

matter. Such disregard was in part based on the belief that many who did not receive a 'good' education could nevertheless find work or operate businesses" (Caine and Caine, 1997, p.3). Those students who were able to succeed in such a system went on to college. The others were needed for factory jobs. This inherent inequity in the system was of little consequence in an era where jobs could be found with or without a post-secondary education.

This same system of education is being used in today's Information Age. Technology has eliminated many of the jobs that existed for workers in Carnegie's era. Today's employers are seeking workers who can process and analyze information, work in groups, and think critically. "Twenty-first century organizations will need to be reinvented if they are to adapt to the rapidly changing conditions in the world around them" (Clark White, 2002, p.9). Education reform is no longer an option for school administrators. It is a matter of equity.

Inequity is inherent in any school system that uses the Carnegie unit, because different performance standards are acceptable for different students. "It is not a measure of learning, nor does it require any involvement on the part of the student beyond a nominal physical presence in the classroom" (Jantzie, 1998, p.3). Frank and Susan have both spent enough time in their seats to earn 40 high school English credits, yet their performance levels are at opposite ends of the spectrum. This system allows educators to "dumb-down" the curriculum for certain students who are perceived

## Reforms are extremely difficult to implement because the Carnegie unit has become a deeply embedded fundamental notion of "good" practice in the minds of parents and children.

as incapable or unwilling to master a rigorous course of study.

Below the college track, however, the standards are lower, less external and less explicit...until we reach the bottom track, where it is still true in many states that a high school diploma depends only on getting a D- or better in one's courses, and getting a D- depends only on turning in homework most of the time (quality does not count)...(Tucker and Coddling, 1998, p.25)

Schools that allow students to graduate with less knowledge and skills than other students, while still earning the same number of credits, could be considered participants in educational malpractice. "Providing 'opportunities' for education without being accountable for educational outcomes simply perpetuates in a more subtle form the injustices that the Brown decision attempted to rectify" (Williams, 1992, p.2). Educators cannot allow nominal performance in high school through the continued use of the Carnegie unit.

Another concern regarding the inequity of the Carnegie unit lies in its intended purpose of indicating a level of "readiness." It suggests that high school graduates possess the necessary skills to succeed in a post-secondary institution. "...[M]ore than a million youngsters graduate from U.S. high schools with only an 8th grade level of literacy- not nearly adequate to do college-level work" (Tucker and Coddling, 1998, p.26). Clearly Frank and Susan are not equally prepared for the rigors of college.

Frank will have to spend much of his time taking remedial courses in English, while Susan will easily make the transition. The Carnegie unit was created as an indicator of post-secondary eligibility, not the ability to succeed. This distinction is unclear and fosters a false sense of security in some students.

**T**he need to reform the system is apparent when such inequity exists. Reforms are extremely difficult to implement because the Carnegie unit has become a deeply embedded fundamental notion of "good" practice in the minds of parents and children.

They are often afraid that if credits and grades are abandoned, their school will not be considered a 'real' school. ...[T]he public perceives certain defining characteristics of school as those things that they have come to think of as 'real school.' Any attempt to alter 'real school' ... is very difficult even when the alteration will clearly produce better results (Marzano, 2000, p.2).

The constituents of high schools are also concerned that colleges and Universities will not take them seriously if they change their practices. "They retain the 50- to 60- minute courses and the usual system of credits because of convenience and a concern from educators and parents that acting otherwise will endanger graduates' chances of being admitted to college" (Nathan, 1995, p.1). These phobias of changing policies are inhibiting schools from making

needed changes.

If the Carnegie were eliminated, many organizational and instructional changes would follow.

Possibilities abound for dividing the instructional day differently, but no other approach so readily lends itself to a system dictated by Carnegie units. For example, experiential education that gets students out of the classroom and into the field is barely a factor in high schools, in part because it would complicate the counting of hours (Maeroff, 1993, p.4).

Many concepts would be better understood if they were not taught as discrete units. Kohn (1999) stated,

... [T]here is nothing inherent in the idea of knowledge that requires it to be divided up this way: The current arrangement is actually just a function of convenience and academic politics. Indeed, some areas of study that we take for granted today, such as psychology, didn't even exist as distinct disciplines a little more than a century ago (p.68).

**E**ducators are now facing real challenges to the Carnegie unit system. Students have graduated from high schools across the nation without the fundamental skills to be successful in college. This has led state lawmakers to require high school exit exams to assess students' competency levels. High schools are now facing a major dilemma: they must prepare

students to pass these exit exams or face lawsuits from parents and civil rights groups. A system that delivers high-level content and instruction and holds students equally accountable for their learning has never been more important.

In light of this new legislation and because of the inequity of the current system, high school graduation standards must be redefined. Tucker and Codding (1998) suggest, "...[W]e would want to make sure that the standards made clear not only what the student should know and be able to do but also how well the student needs to know it and be able to do it" (p.28). Any measurement of a student's academic abilities must be clearly tied to standards of achievement, rather than linked to seat time. Most states have already developed subject-area, grade-level standards, but do not define how well a student must master them before advancing a grade-level. These standards should be so well defined, and the assessments of them so clearly

articulated, that every teacher and every student would know what needed to be taught and learned. High schools, colleges and their constituents must work together to create a new college admissions process that is intricately linked to these defined standards. These groups must also agree on methods of assessing students' mastery of them.

Bureaucratic reforms are more difficult to implement. High schools and colleges must be willing to change their methods of record keeping and communication. Student transcripts should reflect more precisely a student's abilities and accomplishments rather than list credits and grades. For example, performance assessments could be recorded electronically and sent to colleges and universities as proof of standard mastery. Rubrics assessing specific, essential standards could be designed and added to a student's college application packet. Numerous possibilities exist for improving systems.

Alternative education programs have the flexibility needed to implement such changes. Administrators of these schools could lead the reform movement. Adopting a system of credits in order to conform to the standards of traditional schools only furthers the educational inequity that alternative school students have experienced. Performance-based assessments, such as rubrics, demonstrations, and presentations are all tools that enhance learning and ensure equity.

Schools that fail to recognize the need for reforms in the awarding of credits will continue to foster a system that breeds inequity. Educational institutions must advance from the Industrial Era into the Information Age. The rigid system of calculating seat time should be replaced with a system that fosters high expectations for all students. Only when such a system exists will both Frank and Susan be equally prepared for college and the world around them.

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### About the Author

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# Closer Connections

Cecilia Molina

The challenge for alternative schools is similar throughout the state: How do you provide the social and emotional support needed by young people who have had major problems in the regular school system, while at the same time providing a sound academic program that deals with the deficits in their learning and lack of classroom success? And how do you do this while meeting rigorous new state standards, including the High School Exit Exam?

There are no easy answers. In Santa Barbara, we have found that community partnerships have helped us in many important ways reach our mission of respect, reconnection and readiness. We have also found ways to restructure our educational delivery system to better meet the evolving needs of our students.

## Who we are

First, some background: El Puente Community School — Santa Barbara is an alternative school within the Santa Barbara County Education Office whose purpose is to serve at-risk students from grades seven through 12 who have had problems as a result of their behavior in the regular school system, including truancy, drug or alcohol abuse, anger, fighting or expulsion.

Our county superintendent, Bill Cirone, has provided the leadership needed to seek community support and services for the campus. He knows the difficulty parents face when their child is referred to an

alternative school and he wants the experience to be safe, healthy and successful. The goal is to help young people learn to accept responsibility for their actions and learn to make good decisions. Superintendent Cirone has inspired us to do as much as we possibly can to help each student meet his or her rehabilitation plan in a safe and positive school environment.

## Respect, reconnection and readiness

EPSB's mission is based on three fundamental principles: respect, reconnection and readiness. These principles are stated clearly and also dictate how we operate our schools. Our first responsibility is to provide all the students with a safe school. When students enroll, they are asked to sign and honor the school's Neutral Territory Agreement. It ensures their commitment to keep the school safe.

Respect and responsibility are expectations that must be met by all students and staff. Our local law enforcement agencies are constantly available to the students and staff, and can be seen on our campus on a daily basis. The District Attorney's Truancy Program has been instrumental in helping to curb truancy at our school site. The entire staff receives ongoing training in safety and identification of such high-risk behaviors as anger, social misconduct disorders, drug and alcohol use, depression and emotional or physical abuse.

In addition, all teacher assistants are trained in conflict mediation. They are asked to mediate

conflicts among students on a daily basis. Once students are able to agree to mediation, they are asked to sign a mediation contract and honor the terms.

## Community support

A key ingredient to our ability to help our students has been partnerships, created through a variety of grants and donations in connection with an array of community-based agencies. These partnerships have enabled us to help our students deal with sobriety and other emotional and behavioral needs, while also helping their families understand that their children need the support of the school and the community.

One of our most important partners is the Council of Drug and Alcohol Fighting Back Program, which provides two full-time counselors known as Youth Services Specialists. They provide individual, group, crisis and family counseling for all the students, and they help coordinate other agencies to come to school to provide more specific services. Youth Services Specialists also provide an after-school drug and alcohol treatment program using acupuncture and counseling at the Daniel Bryant Treatment Center.

Other agencies in this category include Planned Parenthood (healthy relationships counseling); Community Action Commission (Los Compadres); Zona Seca (family coaches); Teenage Parenting Program; Girls, Inc. (health and relationships) and Mental Health.

Community partnerships with City of Peace, Speaking of Stories and Art for Walk have also provided students with classes in art, literature, drama, filmmaking, photography and poetry.

The Beyond Tolerance Center in Santa Barbara has enabled our teachers to attend summer institutes (one week of training) in "Facing Our History," a curriculum taught by all our teachers that focuses on the struggles throughout history that arise from racism, discrimination and intolerance.

For the past five years, the school has been committed to taking our students to the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles. The trip is attended by 80 students with 80 members of the community who are mentors for the day. The purpose is to help bring about in our students a closer connection to the community. It is funded partly by the Beyond Tolerance Center and donations from the Rotary Club.

### **Other vital partnerships**

EPSB has been very fortunate to have tremendous support from the Sunrise Rotary Club, whose members monthly honor a student who has been able to turn his or her life around in a positive and productive way. It also provides donations to help fund the trips to the Museum of Tolerance and join the students as mentors for the day. The Rotary Club provides scholarships to seniors, and is always willing to help with any special need when asked.

Santa Barbara City College is another vital partner with our school. Students can enroll in college courses through its Advanced High School program and online courses. City College helped us bring a computer repair program to our school by providing the teacher training, equipment and guidance for the class to be taught at our campus. The course is being offered every year with the goal of enhancing technology in the classroom. The students are able to refurbish computers and use them at home once they complete the three-semester course.

### **The academic program**

The coordination and development of these partnerships are a top priority at our school, but our primary focus is our academic program. The teaching staff understands it is vital to have students work on behaviors on a daily basis in order for them to become successful in the classroom. The supportive staff makes sure that students have access to programs and services throughout the day.

Being a member of the teaching staff is very challenging, because so much is being offered at the site and because of the demands we place on our teachers to provide the best educational settings for all the students while remaining positive, creative and inspiring.

Our assistant superintendent for instructional services, Carol Johansen, has helped us restruc-

ture the academic program to focus on the deficits that our students face in the areas of reading, writing and math. One important goal is to help all students pass the California High School Exit Exam and meet content standards for high school. She has provided the teaching staff with support, teacher trainings and opportunities that focus on strategies, programs and standards-based instruction. Our site is on track to meet the Alternative Schools Accountability Model (ASAM) requirements that will be implemented statewide this spring.

At EPSB, we have been working toward standards-based instruction in the areas of language arts and mathematics. The first step toward our goal of having all our students reading at grade level was to have the teachers trained in Corrective Reading, a commercial intervention program that was implemented this past June. The second step was the training of all teachers to teach high school algebra and pre-algebra, which was implemented at the start of the summer session.

### **Secondary Literacy Support Network**

This past September EPSB was accepted as a pilot school with WestEd's Secondary Literacy Support Network, which has provided our site's literacy team (the principal and two teachers) with a tremendous amount of information, support, programs and strategies to develop an intensive literacy intervention

EPSB has been gradually moving from an independent, self-paced strategy to direct instruction, where the focus is on student learning and achievement.

Now we are working harder than ever to provide a sound academic reading and writing program that crosses over all areas of content to give all our students the opportunities that they might have missed due to the behaviors that kept them out of school.

program that will reshape our school.

EPSB has been gradually moving from an independent, self-paced strategy to direct instruction, where the focus is on student learning and achievement. The three-year commitment with the Secondary Literacy Support Network will help us reach all of our students in most effective manner possible.

WestEd trained the team in implementing Diagnostic Assessment in Reading at the site level. The DAR, an excellent assessment tool for at-risk secondary level students, allows us interpret and effectively use data to develop appropriate intensive interventions in reading and writing. Upcoming trainings will focus on how to teach reading strategies in a comprehensive manner using scripted programs (Corrective Reading and REACH), effective teaching strategies to build vocabulary and word usage, comprehension skills and spelling.

Another exciting part of WestED's literacy program has been the opportunity to develop a plan to train teachers to teach reading and writing while they teach math, history and other subject areas. The next few phases of the plan will focus on teaching students the different styles of writing that will help them pass the HSEE. Our team plans to join the other pilot schools in presenting their literacy plans this spring at the Secondary Literacy Summit in Sacramento.

Now we are working harder than ever to provide a sound academic reading and writing program that crosses over all areas of content to give all our students the opportunities that they might have missed due to the behaviors that kept them out of school.

### Meeting the benchmarks

The way alternative education has conducted business has evolved tremendously over the past few

years. There is no doubt that standards-based instruction and the HSEE have been instrumental in holding us accountable for changes in academic delivery methods at our site.

Being at an alternative school with the small class size (25:2); the self-contained classroom (elementary school teaching model); and the dedicated, caring and talented professional teaching staff have helped us meet the challenges of these times. When a school like ours has support and leadership from the district, the support and respect of the community and a dedicated teaching staff, we can meet those benchmarks placed by the state and by our own high standards.

It has taken years to develop a strong alternative school, and the process is ongoing — which is part of the satisfaction of being in alternative education.

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### About the Author

**Cecilia Molina** is principal of El Puente Community School in Santa Barbara. She was ACSA's Continuation and Alternative Education Options Administrator of the Year in 2000-01.

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# Targeting Specific Students Can Make a Big Difference

Dennis R. Parker

**Making schoolwork for every student by name is an unprecedented challenge. That many educators in the United States have made it their life's work is a tribute to their belief in kids and their teachers. And since "one-size-fits-all" is anathema to this quest, there is a constant demand for ways of differentiating instruction and providing alternative programs.**

**T**his year, several authors in *Leadership* have advocated the need to be "strategic." Both Schmoker (*RESULTS*, 1999) and Reeves (*Accountability in Action*, 2000) have predicated their work on pursuing "laser-like" targets for optimal results. These targets usually involve curriculum, but they can also include students! Indeed, Wang et al (Dec/Jan, 1993-94, *Education Leadership*) have found "teacher-student social interactions" to rank fifth among 28 factors that affect student achievement. And, according to David Ramirez of Technological Innovations, Inc. (San Antonio), some schools and districts in Texas — by assigning from one mentor to a "swat team" of five per student — actually move up to 80 percent of students below the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile to grade level in a single year.

## **Special attention to targeted students**

**I** have worked with a number of K-12 schools to target specific students, based on this research, and those efforts are showing great promise. Teachers simply choose a few students to whom they will give extra attention: usually overt attention in elementary schools and often covert in secondary schools to avoid embarrassing students in front of their peers.

Students are usually chosen using SAT-9 data, with a high priority for students near the 20<sup>th</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> percentiles for maximum gain on the Academic Performance Index. Although they are an even higher priority, students below the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile are most often served by well-defined, effective interventions including pull-out or in-put programs, before- and after-school programs, Saturday school, summer school, etc. If there are no SAT-9 scores available (grades K-2 or 12), students are chosen based on poor attendance, behavior problems, working significantly below potential, etc.

**At the secondary level, teachers choose two students per period for at least four weeks at a time. In**

**elementary schools, teachers choose two to five students, also for a given period. The goal is to provide these students with some extra social, emotional and/or academic attention. Teachers may:**

1. Confer one-on-one with each student about his or her SAT-9 student report, highlighting strengths and choosing two to four "focus areas" to work harder on this year. Although this is usually best done by teachers, one principal in Fontana actually met with each student herself!
2. Smile, make eye contact and engage in some social conversation daily over and above what they would do normally. This could include asking about the student's weekend; commenting on any new article of clothing; or asking an opinion about a popular topic, entertainer or news event.
3. Look up and recognize students' birthdays. A middle-grade teacher reported dramatic, positive effects on students' behavior after doing so.

Fortunately, these strategies cost nothing, are easy to implement and do not cut into a teacher's day very much, if at all.

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| <p>4. Give students a job in class: passing out papers, moving books, erasing the board, preparing a graphic organizer, bringing in some material or prop for an upcoming lesson. Erin Gruwell (<i>Freedom Writers</i>, 1999; Wilson High School, Long Beach, CA) made good use of this strategy to "hook" her "chiefs" or student leaders into participating in class.</p> <p>5. Assign target students as cross-age tutors for younger students.</p> <p>6. Give target students special status for one week. One elementary teacher chooses five students a week to occupy special seats up front on the carpet each day, carry with them all day the class's five stuffed monkeys, complete</p> | <p>classroom chores, and eat lunch with the teacher on Friday.</p> <p>7. Use TESA (Teacher Expectations for Student Achievement) strategies with target students each day beyond what is normal. Pass by and pause next to the student; ask an extra academic question per day with sufficient wait time; coach, delve or extend the student's answer; and provide positive feedback on performance and reasons for the praise.</p> <p>8. Make a parent contact to highlight only a positive behavior or trait exhibited by the target student.</p> <p>9. Share information about target students at grade-level, house</p> | <p>or department meetings for additional support and suggestions.</p> <p><b>Small kindnesses can make a big difference</b></p> <p><b>F</b>ortunately, these strategies cost nothing, are easy to implement and do not cut into a teacher's day very much, if at all. They can, however, make a huge difference in students' investment of effort, attitude and connectedness to school. Because they are easy, they are also easy not to do! But there is nothing to lose by trying them schoolwide. And sometimes the smallest daily kindnesses make the biggest differences.</p> |
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# Disaggregating Standardized Achievement Test Data for a Juvenile Court and Community Schools Program

Wendell J. Callahan, Ph.D. & Ana Kodzic

The successful education of the highly transient, delinquent, neglected, and certainly academically compromised population of students in California Juvenile Court and Community Schools is dependent upon the delivery of effective and informed instructional practices. Informed instructional decisions necessitate the efficient and meaningful analysis of group achievement data. Sanders (1995) described past practices reliant on the use of aggregated test scores to describe and compare the academic success of programs and schools. Increasingly, however, Sanders and other researchers (Hacker, 2000) have argued for disaggregated methods of data analysis for student performance data.

Disaggregated methods typically reveal a more nuanced portrayal of student performance, once sub-groups are analyzed and critical factors identified. Indeed, Hacker (2000) in his Missouri study revealed the hidden success of a group of schools when income was factored out by disaggregating the data. The study showed that although both groups of schools had made significant academic progress, the group of schools with a larger proportion of low-income students had made greater progress when the income was

controlled as an independent variable.

Wade (2001) found the use of disaggregation methods was beneficial in creating a school profile. The profile was developed using student test results, grade point averages, standardized test results, duration of enrollment, attendance, grade level, ethnicity, gender, family background, and language proficiency. This strategy provided a profile specific for that school alone, and it helped identify targets for school improvement as well as strengths in the school program. Scherer (2003) found disaggregation methods effective for identification of groups of underachieving students in need of additional intervention. Schwartz (2002), citing unpublished work by Slowinski, proposed the analysis of data from underachieving students in order to determine which factors the students have in common that contribute to their difficulties in school. Johnson (1997) discusses the use of disaggregated outcome data such as attendance, grades, as well as standardized achievement data, as a baseline measure for the development and evaluation of intervention projects that may be implemented as a result of the analysis.

Disaggregation methods developed by Bernhardt (1998,

2003) have been valuable for the analysis and presentation of data for program improvement and accreditation reports. Bernhardt's methods have also proved useful in tracking the progress of schools' goals, predicting the success of programs, as well as assessing student motivation and perception of learning. Although such methods have proven valuable for these applications, the use of such methods in alternative education can be problematic because of the high transiency, attitudinal factors, and generally lower score ranges of students in alternative education settings.

The current paper presents an alternative method of disaggregated data analysis for Juvenile Court and Community School programs, which may also be applicable to other alternative education programs. This method focuses on the analysis of achievement test data along the following dimensions:

- Length of enrollment prior to testing
- School District of origin
- Test-taking attitude
- Ethnicity and gender
- Language proficiency
- Special Education status

With the public reporting of aggregated standardized test results required by California's Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program, alternative school administrators are often found in the difficult position of explaining low group scores to local governing boards as well as the local media. This type of reporting of aggregate scores offers only a point in time assessment of a student population that may significantly change in composition in a matter of months. Consequently, aggregate reporting alone is neither sufficient nor appropriate to demonstrate the effectiveness of many alternative education programs. The recent implementation of the federal *No Child Left Behind Act* (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2002) further necessitates the need for disaggregated analysis of student subgroup performance. Although certainly not an ideal or preferred method of assessing the effectiveness of alternative education programs, the use of disaggregated, standardized group achievement test data offers a more accurate account of the performance of students on state mandated standardized tests in alterna-

tive educational settings.

## Method

### Data Source

Stanford Achievement Test, 9<sup>th</sup> Edition (Psychological Corporation, 1996) and California Standards Test (California Dept. of Education, 2002) scores for the San Diego County Office of Education, Juvenile Court & Community Schools were used for all analyses. All tests were administered in April and May of 2000, 2001 and 2002.

### Data Coding

The coding system presented in this paper represents an expansion of a system originally developed by Riley Johnson, Rafii, and Fusco (1998). In the present coding scheme ethnicity, gender, language proficiency, and special education status (i.e., setting and handicapping condition) variables were coded on the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Answer Document (CDE, 2002). However, length of enrollment, test-taking attitude, school

setting and district of origin were coded using the Local Use Codes fields on the STAR Answer Document. The Local Use Codes were locally developed (i.e., determined by the local LEA or school) and are coded by hand in the ten-digit field labeled "FOR LOCAL USE" on the student demographics page of the STAR/SAT9 answer document. Using commercially available analytical/statistical software, these codes were used to sort and disaggregate test data according to the values coded. These fields are applicable to and are unchanged for the 2003 Standardized Testing and Reporting Program, comprised of the California Standards Tests (California Department of Education, 2003) and California Achievement Test, 6th Edition (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 2003). These fields are also found on the California High School Exit Examination (California Department of Education, 2003) as well as other state assessments. It is important to note that these values must be user defined. Table 1 below describes the Local Use Codes used by the San Diego County Juvenile Court and Community Schools.

**Table 1. Local Use Codes**

Factor	Values	Field Position	Description
School Setting	Jan-99	1 through 2	Codes specific Court or Community School Site
District of Origin	100-300	3 through 5	Codes last school district attended by student prior to current enrollment
Test-taking Attitude	100-500*	6 through 8	Codes students test-taking behavior*
Length of Enrollment	0-999	9 through 10	Codes school days of student enrollment

\*Testing behavior is rated using the following 5-point scale: 100=very poor test taking effort; 200=poor test taking attitude; 300=fair test taking attitude; 400=good test taking attitude; 500=very good test taking attitude.

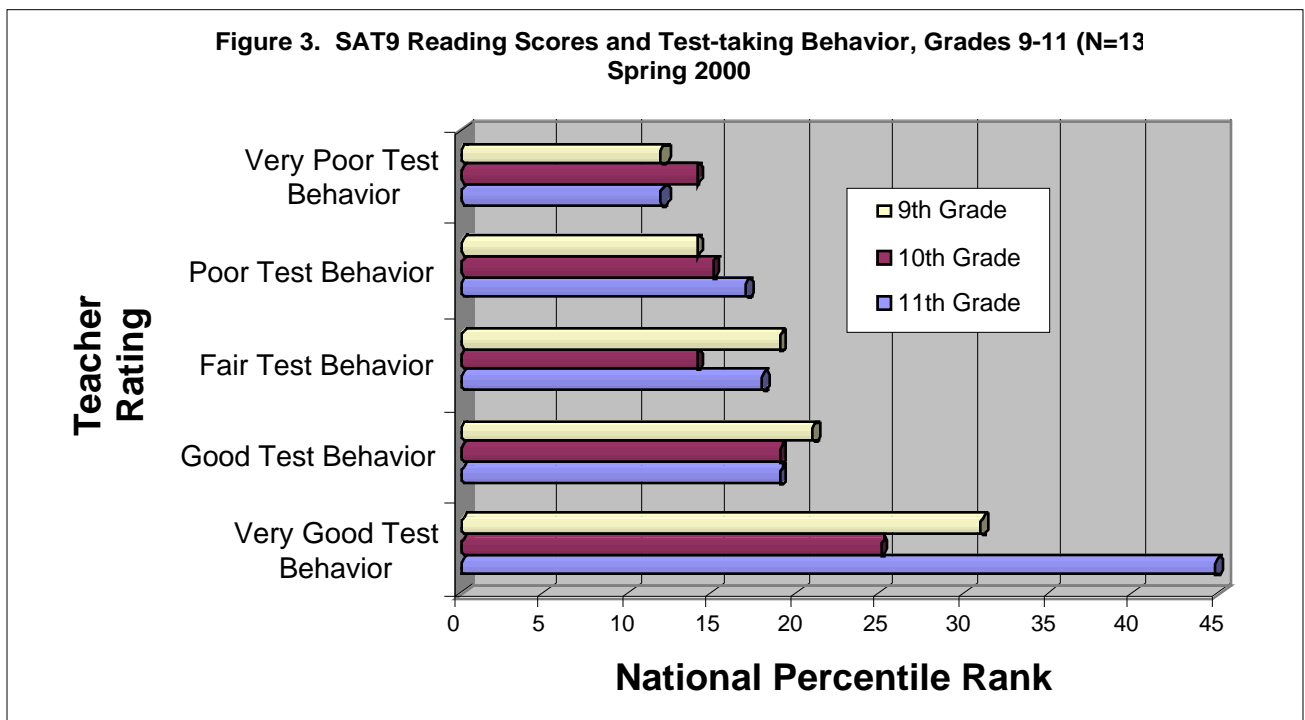
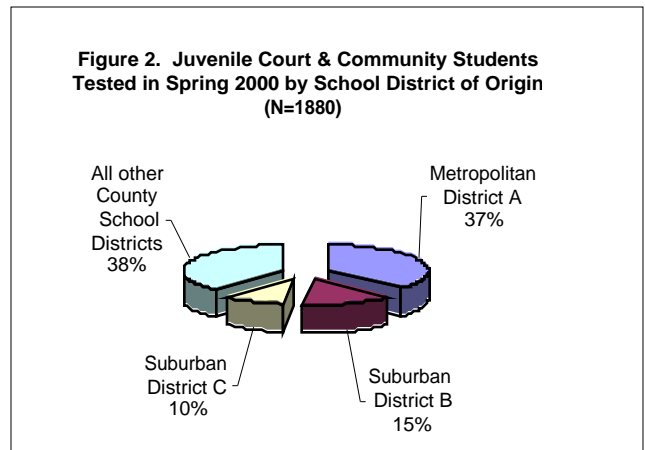
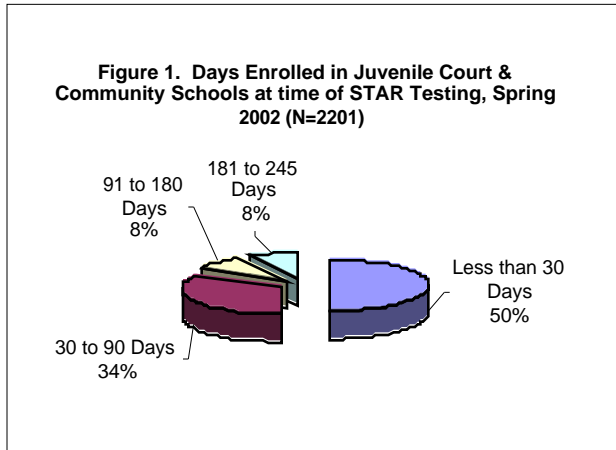
## Results

Figure 1 presents the distribution of San Diego County Juvenile Court and Community School students in different enrollment length categories at the time of Standardized Testing and Reporting Program (STAR) testing in the Spring of 2002. Of the 2201 students tested, 50 percent had been enrolled in the Juvenile Court and Community Schools less than 30 days prior to testing. These data clearly illustrate the brief

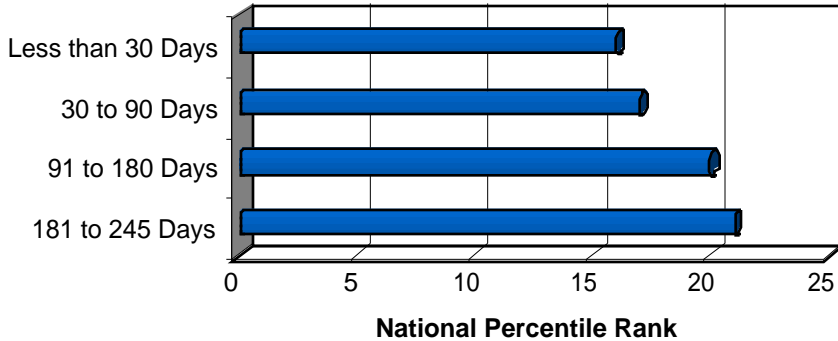
enrollment periods many Juvenile Court and Community School students experience prior to the administration of standardized achievement tests.

Figure 2 depicts the primary feeder districts into the San Diego County Juvenile Court and Community Schools during the Spring 2000 semester. These data show that three large San Diego County school districts account for more than 60 percent of students enrolled in Juvenile Court and Community Schools.

Figure 3 illustrates an increase in upper grade SAT9 reading scores as a function of teacher-rated student test-taking behavior. Teachers rated the overall test behavior of their students on a five-point scale. Students with the highest behavioral ratings scored higher than those with lower behavioral ratings. Indeed, eleventh-graders with the highest behavioral ratings outscored their peers with the lowest ratings by more than 30 percentile points. These data confirm the suspicions of many



**Figure 4. Ninth Grade SAT9 Reading Scores and Length of JCCS Enrollment (N=696) Spring 2002**



secondary school educators that standardized achievement tests are sometimes a more accurate measure of motivation than student academic achievement.

Figure 4 charts a modest increase in Juvenile Court and Community School students' SAT9 reading scores over four enrollment length categories. These data may be viewed as a value-added assessment, as this method attempts to ascertain the relative

student gains during Juvenile Court and Community School enrollment.

Tables 2 and 3 depict perhaps the most powerful data analyses for Juvenile Court and Community Schools, by illustrating the academic plight of subgroups within the Juvenile Court and Community Schools. Commonly referred to as the "achievement gap," the relative differences between ethnic and racial subgroups, students with disabilities,

gender groups and linguistic groups reveal patterns similar to those found in the general education population with one important distinction. That is, the entire distribution of aggregate Juvenile Court and Community School students' scores is positively skewed. For example, as shown in Table 2, 94 percent of Juvenile Court and Community School students scored at the Basic, Below Basic or Far Below Basic level on the California English-Language Arts Standards Test. Table 3 shows that in 2002, 89 percent of Juvenile Court and Community School students scored at or below the 50th percentile on the SAT9 Reading Test. Now, with these distributions as starting points, consider the distribution of Juvenile Court and Community School students who are also English Learners. On the California English-Language Arts Standards Test, 100 percent of English Learners scored in the Basic, Below Basic or Far Below Basic levels, with 70 percent scoring Far Below Basic (see Table 2). A similar pattern emerged on the SAT9 Reading Test, with 95 percent of English Learners scoring

**Table 2. California Standards Tests (CST) Spring 2002  
Summary of Juvenile Court and Community Schools (JCCS) Grades 2 through 11 (N=2201)  
Typical percentages of students scoring within each proficiency level**

	English-Language Arts					Mathematics				
	Far Below Basic	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced	Far Below Basic	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
All JCCS Students	35%	30%	29%	6%	3%	44%	41%	16%	7%	4%
Long-Term Students	39%	30%	25%	8%	0%	31%	51%	18%	5%	0%
Male	50%	27%	19%	4%	0%	48%	43%	16%	3%	0%
Female	33%	32%	27%	8%	2%	44%	47%	13%	6%	1%
English Learners	70%	26%	6%	0%	0%	48%	44%	18%	0%	0%
African American	41%	27%	25%	6%	1%	35%	55%	10%	3%	0%
Asian	55%	33%	7%	7%	7%	33%	25%	25%	8%	8%
Hispanic	41%	37%	19%	3%	1%	52%	49%	14%	8%	0%
White	27%	30%	31%	10%	3%	20%	42%	31%	7%	9%
Special Education	69%	19%	11%	3%	0%	48%	46%	7%	0%	0%

Note: Total may sum to more than 100% because of summary calculation across grade levels

## Alternative Education as a Change Agent

**Table 3. Stanford Achievement Test (SAT9) Scores Spring 2001 and Spring 2002  
Summary of Juvenile Court & Community Schools (JCCS) Grades 2 through 11 (N=2201)  
Scores as a percent of students scoring within each given quartile**

	Reading								Mathematics								Language							
	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002
All JCCS Students	70%	67%	19%	22%	7%	9%	3%	2%	63%	63%	25%	25%	10%	10%	2%	2%	64%	64%	21%	21%	10%	11%	4%	4%
Long-Term Students	66%	63%	21%	21%	7%	12%	6%	5%	60%	50%	28%	27%	9%	21%	2%	2%	60%	56%	26%	25%	11%	14%	3%	5%
Male	71%	65%	19%	23%	7%	9%	3%	3%	62%	65%	25%	24%	10%	10%	2%	10%	69%	61%	18%	23%	9%	12%	3%	4%
Female	70%	62%	20%	24%	7%	10%	3%	3%	64%	64%	25%	24%	8%	11%	2%	1%	58%	56%	25%	25%	12%	14%	5%	5%
English Learners	87%	84%	9%	11%	4%	4%	0%	1%	72%	70%	23%	21%	4%	7%	1%	2%	74%	79%	18%	16%	6%	3%	1%	2%
African American	72%	68%	19%	22%	7%	8%	2%	2%	69%	64%	23%	27%	6%	9%	2%	1%	65%	66%	24%	18%	8%	12%	3%	4%
Asian	85%	81%	13%	13%	0%	3%	2%	3%	72%	50%	23%	31%	4%	16%	0%	3%	78%	78%	18%	13%	2%	9%	2%	0%
Hispanic	79%	75%	16%	18%	4%	7%	1%	1%	66%	67%	27%	24%	6%	8%	1%	1%	71%	71%	18%	19%	8%	8%	2%	2%
White	49%	47%	28%	30%	15%	16%	8%	6%	46%	55%	29%	28%	21%	14%	4%	3%	51%	49%	24%	25%	19%	18%	7%	8%
Special Education	83%	80%	13%	13%	3%	6%	1%	1%	75%	79%	21%	16%	3%	4%	1%	1%	83%	80%	13%	16%	2%	3%	3%	1%

Q1 = 1st Quartile, 1st-25th percentile
Q2 = 2nd Quartile, 26th-50th percentile
Q3 = 3rd Quartile, 51th-75th percentile
Q4 = 4th Quartile, 76th-99th percentile

at or below the 50th percentile in 2002 (see Table 3). Consideration of these disparities within the Juvenile Court and Community School student population are requisite to inform instructional planning and decision-making at both the program and school site level.

It is important to note that the methods presented here and in Tables 2 and 3 represent the summary of student performance over multiple grade levels. This method is commonly used for the California School Accountability Report Card (SARC) as well as other accountability reports. While this method offers an overall summary of student achievement trends, it can also be replicated at each grade level and/or at a school site level to target even more specific subgroups for analysis.

### Discussion

Disaggregation of standardized achievement test scores clearly offers a more accurate interpretation of the performance of students in Juvenile Court and Community School

programs. Indeed, trends and findings virtually undetectable in aggregated score reports, are easily discovered using a disaggregation method that offers important insights for school administrators and instructors to ascertain a clearer understanding of their students' test performance. Indeed, analysis by student test-taking attitude revealed a clear relationship between the level of effort put forth by the student and the performance level achieved. Further investigation of this relationship may offer a more informed understanding of the role of motivation in the test performance of this student population. It certainly offers compelling reasons for administrators and teachers to address motivational issues prior to the administration of standardized tests.

Analysis of length of enrollment and test performance offers alternative school administrators evidence of the instructional effectiveness of the educational program, and is certainly more meaningful than the interpretation of point-in-time aggregate reports as indicative of instructional quality. Considering that most court and community school students are

enrolled less than one year, the value of this type of analysis is readily apparent.

The current analysis and disaggregation scheme is presented as a model of a locally developed system designed to meet the goals and data analytic needs of a specific California court & community school program. While it offers a method to investigate trends and specific results that are likely to be overlooked or undetectable by traditional aggregate methods, it is certainly not presented as a method to be rigidly applied to all alternative education programs. To be sure, the strength of this method is its reliance on the locally-defined variables and categories to facilitate data collection along dimensions deemed meaningful by the instructional leadership of a specific educational program. School administrators endeavoring to employ such a method of disaggregated analysis are strongly encouraged to first identify the local variables and dimensions of value and interest to their specific school program. Once identified, a meaningful and accurate set of local codes and variables should then be developed to ensure collection of the appropriate data.

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The authors wish to thank Ms. Patricia Jimenez for her assistance in the preparation of this manuscript. Please direct requests for reprints of this article to the first author at callahan@sdcoe.net



# Creating Community through a Character-Based Literacy Program

Dr. John R. Flores, Manuel Benson, & Susan Jensen

Creating instructional programming that is meaningful and relevant for alternative education students has always been a challenge. Most of the students served in alternative education have missed some of the basics needed to be competitive with their peers in traditional school settings and have not acquired the skills for positive character formation. In addition, there are many other factors that must be addressed, such as providing a plan for teaching to the standards, providing support for teachers, and creating shared expectations. An additional challenge has been providing instructional programming that aligns to the new accountability expectations for alternative education in the State of California.

This new era of accountability has led Alameda County Office of Education staff to a fundamental realization that literacy could be an effective foundation on which to redesign instructional programming to meet the new expectations. Alameda County Office of Education administration and teachers became aware of the Character-Based Literacy (CBL) Program being implemented in other counties under the leadership of Brother Steve Johnson through the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics at Santa Clara University. As a result of several staff presentations by Brother Steve it was determined that Character-Based Literacy would best meet our needs in the content area of English/Language Arts.

The CBL program was specifically designed to work with at risk youth. It has been implemented in over 200 alternative schools nationwide. Currently it is used in Santa Clara, Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Cruz, Monterey, and San Benito Counties and is soon to be started in two other northern California counties. It has also been implemented in alternative schools within traditional school settings.

The foundation of the Character-Based Literacy Program is to build literacy through a set of strategies and tactics while reducing antisocial thoughts, values, and behaviors by replacing them with pro-social thoughts, values, and behaviors and increasing coping and cooperation skills. It contains a series of value theme units that use a wide selection of recommended readings and supportive materials to meet California Reading-Language Arts Standards and the areas contained within them: reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing and visual representation (See Figure 1).

The link to character-based instruction is created through two-month themes that reflect the goals of the CBL program: responsibility, self-direction, courage/self-control, change requires effort, respect/moderation, and integrity. They are generalized guidelines for instruction that lead students into areas of reflection and discussion. Reflection and discussion help students to reconsider their own

thoughts and actions in connection to anti-social and criminal behavior.

Change is difficult. Implementation of the literacy campaign began in February of 2002 with many organizational and logistical problems. During the summer of 2002, administrators and staff made a concerted effort to address the problems of purchasing and distributing materials and training over 40 teachers, support staff, and administrators. As a result of this planning, the CBLP materials have become available in a timely manner for proper classroom preparation. In addition, an organized approach to staff training has become the foundation for implementation.

The program requires continuous teacher training. Teachers have the opportunity to select from over 120 workshops addressing areas such as: two month theme units; CBL for social studies and science teachers; CBL for special education students; adaptation to an independent study program; portfolio development; word study skills; CBL for high turnover populations; and development of a seven phase lesson plan. These day long workshops through Santa Clara University are conveniently located at both the university and the participating counties. To augment the workshops, quarterly individual teacher conferences with Bob Michels of Santa Clara University further define and develop teachers' implementation skills. As a result, the

goals of the program have become more apparent to the teachers. As time has passed, the experience with lesson planning and familiarity with the philosophy of the Character-Based Literacy Program has resulted in increasing staff support for this systemic approach to literacy.

Since its implementation 12 months ago, Alameda County has found the following major observable results:

- Teachers cooperatively plan lessons and meet to share best practices.
- There is consistent use of lesson

plans based on the California English Language Standards.

- Focused daily writing is stressed.
- County administration supports implementation by attending workshops, coordinating dissemination of featured novels, short story collections and plays, and highlighting CBL in the information newsletter.
- Classroom environments have become rich with visual aids such as time lines, word walls, posters, open mind portraits, and collage.

- Student mobility is addressed through use of a common theme and common methodologies at all sites
- Students with reading difficulties are supported through addressing all modalities of learning including the use of oral and visual aids and through teacher modeled reading, shared reading, and tapes.
- Students are exposed to grade level vocabulary and complexity of text themes despite actual reading level.

Figure 1: Sample CBL Lesson Plan

CharacterBasedLiteracy	1 Nov 4	2 Nov 11 11*	3 Nov 18	4 Nov 25 <sup>28*</sup>	5 Dec 2	6 Dec 9	7 Dec 16	8 Dec 23 <sup>25*</sup>	9 Dec 30 <sup>31*</sup>
THE BIG IDEA Self Direction means I am my own best asset	My life will be what I make of it, nothing more, nothing less. I am the person responsible for directing my life: the people, places and times of my life as well as what I do and what I don't do. There is no one else to blame.								
TEXTS	<i>Julie of the Wolves</i> By Jean Craighead George		<i>Farewell to Manzanar</i> By Houston and Huston			<b>SCHOOL CLOSED</b>			
Novels/Plays/Nonfiction	1-61		62-104		1-22 25-91		95-156		
Short Stories/Poetry	109-170		157-203						
<input type="checkbox"/> gr <input type="checkbox"/> lc <input type="checkbox"/> rw <input type="checkbox"/> dear									
ANCHOR STANDARDS	W2.1: <input type="checkbox"/> 3 specific <input type="checkbox"/> 4 sensory details W2.2: <input type="checkbox"/> 2 grasp significant ideas <input type="checkbox"/> 3 ideas viewpoints <input type="checkbox"/> 4 detailed reference <input type="checkbox"/> 7 ambiguities, nuances W2.3: <input type="checkbox"/> 2 perspectives <input type="checkbox"/> 3 primary secondary sources <input type="checkbox"/> 4 accurately coherently <input type="checkbox"/> 5 relative value <input type="checkbox"/> 6 significance facts								
MAJOR WRITTEN PRODUCTS			<input type="checkbox"/> Report <input type="checkbox"/> Speech		<input type="checkbox"/> kwl <input type="checkbox"/> wordwall <input type="checkbox"/> newslne <input type="checkbox"/> omp		<input type="checkbox"/> ExpEssa y <input type="checkbox"/> Speech <b>SCHOOL CLOSED</b>		
ONGOING PROCESSES	<input type="checkbox"/> timeline <input type="checkbox"/> wordwall <input type="checkbox"/> omp								
VISUAL ORAL PROCESSES	<input type="checkbox"/> omp <input type="checkbox"/> sketch <input type="checkbox"/> cartoon <input type="checkbox"/> cubing <input type="checkbox"/> g6 <input type="checkbox"/> mainidea <input type="checkbox"/> ads <input type="checkbox"/> posters <input type="checkbox"/> layout <input type="checkbox"/> retelling <input type="checkbox"/> theatre <input type="checkbox"/> bkmark <input type="checkbox"/> prop <input type="checkbox"/> collage rap <input type="checkbox"/> show <input type="checkbox"/> sequel <input type="checkbox"/> mobile box		<input type="checkbox"/> bkmark <input type="checkbox"/> g6 <input type="checkbox"/> ads <input type="checkbox"/> collage		<input type="checkbox"/> sequel <input type="checkbox"/> bkmark <input type="checkbox"/> mainidea <input type="checkbox"/> a <input type="checkbox"/> cartoon		<input type="checkbox"/> omp <input type="checkbox"/> ads <input type="checkbox"/> radio <input type="checkbox"/> mainide a <input type="checkbox"/> map <input type="checkbox"/> bkmark		<input type="checkbox"/> retelling <input type="checkbox"/> card <b>SCHOOL CLOSED</b>

- CBL methods have crossed over into all areas of the curriculum and allowed for the use of thematic units in language arts, social science and science.

Using a menu of over 80 strategies, and a list of over 50 novels, plays and short story collection per two month theme unit, teachers have been given a template and support that empowers them to make decisions based on their own strengths and the needs of their students. With a com-

mon curriculum and a common educational philosophy, a dialogue has ensued among teachers, support staff and administrators that will provide the foundation for future decision making.

**A**fter one year of implementation, the Character Based Literacy Program is meeting the needs of Alameda County in providing direction, training and support. Its impact can be seen in the change of instructional delivery in the classroom, the change in classroom envi-

ronments, the change to an academic focus at staff meetings and the change to a more positive relationship with the districts we serve. While meeting the new accountability expectations for alternative education in the State of California, we are also working more collectively as an organization. As an organization we are using CBLP to move towards creating the most meaningful and relevant instructional program possible for our students.

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### Figure 1: Excerpt from student journal

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**The students read a short story, “The Harrington’s Daughter.” Students were asked to do a “thoughtshot” to describe what a character was thinking and to personally respond to those thoughts.**

*What's the matter with the Harrington's daughter? Why is she closed all up in the neighbor's house? Nina is told that she has had an unfortunate experience.*

*The Harrington's daughter, Sigrid, is going crazy because it's like one day her child was here and the next day the child was gone.*

*How I feel about the story is it's not fair to treat Sigrid like that. They don't even know what's going on. I think that Sigrid just needed someone to talk to. She feels as if she is all alone and that's not good. I think that Nina's grandparents are wrong for how they block out Sigrid. I feel you should treat people the way they want to be treated. They are blessed that Nina's mom did not have an experience like that with Nina. How would they feel if Nina went through something like that? I feel so sorry for Sigrid and her family. I think that if I was in Sigrid's shoes, I would be crazy too.*

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### About the Authors

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**Dr. John Flores** currently serves as the Assistant Superintendent for Student Programs and Services at the Alameda County Office of Education. He received his doctorate at the University of Arizona with a major in teaching and learning.

**Susan Jensen** has a Master of Public Administration and is currently coordinating the implementation of the Character Based Literacy Program while providing resource support for the Cal-SAFE program. She has 16 years of experience as a consultant and assistant director in the areas of social service and criminal justice planning and 10 years experience as a classroom teacher.

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# Art Education: A Positive Approach to the Rehabilitation of Juvenile Offenders

Dr. Arthur L. McCoy

## The Inspiration

Driving in East Los Angeles one balmy afternoon, two artists saw drab walls that were surrounded by approximately 30 acres of land. These walls were next to the large new modern constructions that were a part of the University of Southern California's impressive medical facility.

Inquiring what was there, the artist discovered that this was a high risk holding facility for youths who were waiting to be adjudicated in court. Further investigation revealed that a school for alleged juvenile offenders pending court was also located in this facility. The artists contacted the facility's caretakers and educators to determine what contributions could be made to enhance the well-being of these youths.

Thus began a joint adventure between private artists, the Los Angeles County Office of Education, and the Los Angeles County Probation Department to set up an extracurricular art program in 1998. Because of professional commitments, the original artists were unable to continue. However, the Friends of the Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts joined with the school and the probation department to ensure the continuation of the program. Whereas the original founders were not aware that this program would have great thera-



*"The Face of Love"*

peutic value, it became evident that behavior modification and the increase in self-esteem were having a positive effect on the participants, and helping them to explore and develop their artistic talents.

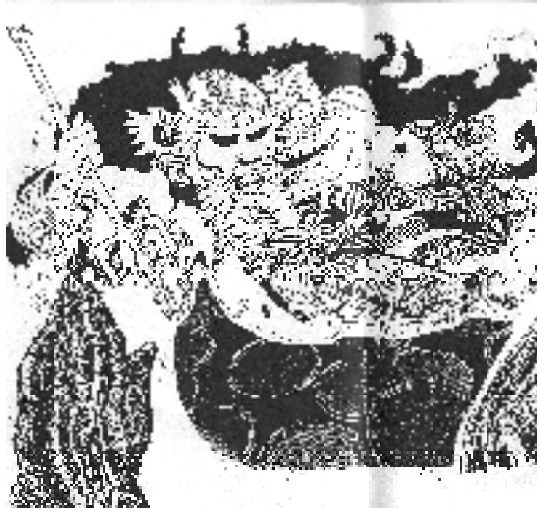
## Global Perspective

The use of the arts in therapy has been practiced since ancient times. The ancient Jews recorded in their writings how the harp was used to deal with the mental problems of King Saul: "Let our lord now command thy an harp: and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee that he shall play with his hand and thou shalt be well." (1 Samuel 16:16 KJV). Fleshman & Fryrear (1981) wrote that the ancient Egyptians utilized concert and dance to provide therapy for the mentally ill, and that the Greeks used drama as a means of dealing with emotional distress. Coughlin (1990) wrote that the Romans believed that poetry had a

healing quality.

Why art should be studied is a question of concern for many educators. No one doubts that art is a viable subject worthy of artistic and academic endeavors; however, some educators believe that art should be studied only for its intrinsic value, while others believe that there are values gained in the study of art that transcend art itself (Hamblen 1992). Art has been an important subject throughout the earliest human history. It is believed that some people first began creating art over 25,000 years ago, as evidenced by the paintings on the caves during the Old Stone Age. In support of the study of art, Munro (1961) wrote: "Art, perhaps man's highest achievement, has mirrored the images of his time far beyond the individual excellence of the sculptor's model or the painter's canvas" (p. 8). The historian Kirchner (1960) wrote that the artists' main concern was "their primary objective of expressing the deepest emotions and aspirations of mankind" (p. 244). Hamblen (1992) reflects these same emotions when she claims in her writings that art promotes creative thinking and self-awareness, and improves overall school performance.

Modern writers and researchers have also addressed how the arts can be an important tool for counselors (Gladding, 1992; Carroad, 1994; Simpson, 1995). Lampela (1995) urges teachers to address sexual orientation through



*"An Ocean King"*

the arts as a way of particularizing diversity in the classroom. In looking at the counseling area in detail, Gladding (1992) states that the school, through the use of counseling and guidance, is the logical setting for first-line intervention. He states that "primary prevention focuses on modifying environments and teaching life skills so that individuals maintain or enhance their mental health" (p. 2). He also believes that students' interest in expressive arts aids their recall and retention. Such observations bring validity to the support of fine arts education, in both instruction and counseling.

### The Setting

Central Juvenile Hall School is located in the community of East Los Angeles, which is comprised predominantly of Hispanic-American families of low socioeconomic status.

While the school is located on the site of Central Juvenile Hall, a probation facility that cares for minors who are awaiting trial, undergoing adjudication, or waiting to be sentenced, the school is an independent institution operated by the Los Angeles

County Office of Education. During any school year there might be as many as 11,000 students enrolled in the school. The average daily attendance is usually around 700 students. School is in session for 247 days per year, and the instructional day is 300 minutes long. The school is accredited by the Western Association of Colleges and Schools, and the school's vision

is: "Our school will empower students to learn with dignity and produce outstanding citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century."

The school is currently staffed with 47 certificated and 24 classified personnel. The certificated staff consists of one principal, 3 assistant principals, a school counselor, a school psychologist, a school language and speech specialist, one resource specialist, and 40 teachers. Students at Central Juvenile Hall school range in age from 9 to 19 years of age, and are 85 percent male and 15 percent female. The ethnic composition is 60 percent Hispanic, 30 percent African-American, and the remaining 10 percent consists of Whites, Asians, and others.

### The Success

The success of this program has been highlighted by two very commendable presentations of the work of the young artists at two public showings. In November of 1998, paintings and drawings were exhibited for public viewing at a prestigious art gallery in Los Angeles, California. Professional artists throughout the area viewed the student work and commented on the sensitive display of emotions and feelings that were evident in

these works of art. The showing resulted in several young artists being offered assistance in entering art schools upon their release from incarceration. In addition, benefactors provided additional support for the program. One of the earliest supporters of the extracurricular art program was the Adult Division of the Los Angeles Unified School District, which provided funding for a professional teacher, elective high school credit, and supplies through Crenshaw Washington Adult School. A group called Friends of Cerritos, through the Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts, provided both professional guidance and accomplished artists to mentor the young artists.

Following the successful presentation at the Los Angeles art gallery, a follow up presentation was held at the Pasadena Armory in the Fall of 1999. Once again the public was given the opportunity to see the paintings and work of the young artists, which resulted in additional resources for the program.

### Case Studies

"Will" is a 16-year-old Hispanic youth who was arrested for armed robbery and attempted murder associated with gang activities. Upon entering the school, Will was hostile to the school environment. Having grown up in East Los Angeles in a family that was dysfunctional, Will did not attend school regularly unless he was incarcerated. Transcripts from his school revealed that he only attended approximately 30 percent of the required time. His grades were predominantly "Fs", and he read at the fourth grade level. He was consistently referred to the assistant principals office for counseling and discipline.

At the juvenile facility, Will was allowed to join the extracurricular art program. After several weeks in the program, his behavior in his

regular school classes improved. Whereas before he was being referred to the office an average of 7 times per week, after two weeks in the art program the referral rate dropped to approximately once every two weeks. The regular classroom teachers noticed a dramatic improvement in his behavior and a new interest in improving his reading ability. Will stated that art provided him with focus and concentration that assisted him in coping with a very difficult life-altering situation.

"Oscar" entered Central Juvenile Hall School in 1998. He became involved in the after school art program, and became extremely interested in animation. A professional animator worked with him in



*"Lady in the Field"*

developing his strong talent. He too came from a dysfunctional but loving family. He is now working as a cartoon animator at a leading production company.

## Encore

Through the ages, art has served as a means for mankind to record its history and to express emotions. This has certainly been the experience of the extracurricular art program at Central Juvenile Hall School. The young artists' expressive paintings, animations, and drawings reflect their emotions and their concerns for the environment around them. All who have

been a part of the program have experienced the young artists' improved self-esteem, ability to relate to one another, and increased value of life-long learning. This program has provided hope for many young people, in addition to opening up the world of art as a positive career route.

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# Special Education Programs for Youth with Disabilities in Juvenile Corrections

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## Abstract

Special education services are available to youth with disabilities in many juvenile correctional facilities in the United States. However in recent years, parents and advocates have challenged the adequacy of services in many states. This article briefly discusses the overrepresentation of youth with disabilities in juvenile corrections, reviews the role of education and literacy in facilitating positive adult outcomes, and suggests differential goals for education programs in short-term versus long-term institutions. The requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) provide a framework for discussion of special education service delivery and the paper concludes with an examination of challenges facing correctional educators.

More than 134,000 youth are in custody in more than 3,700 public and private juvenile correctional facilities in the United States (Sickmund, 2002). Many youth enter correctional facilities with a range of intense educational, mental health, medical, and social needs. Large numbers of incarcerated juveniles are marginally literate or illiterate and have experienced school failure and retention (Center on Crime, Communities, and Culture, 1997). These youth are also disproportionately male, poor, minority, and have significant learning and/or behavioral problems that entitle them to special education and related services. All youth in juvenile corrections, those in short-term detention and those committed to correctional facilities, are entitled to education services (Leone & Meisel, 1997). In addition, youth with disabilities are entitled to specific substantive and procedural rights associated with special education assessment and service delivery under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (20 U.S.C. 1401 et seq).

## Overrepresentation of Youth with Disabilities

A disproportionate number of students with disabilities are placed in public and private facilities across the country. The estimated prevalence of adolescents with disabilities ranges from 30 to 70% of those incarcerated (Rutherford, Nelson, & Wolford, 1985; Murphy, 1986). The most prevalent disabling conditions among youth are learning disabilities and emotional/behavioral disorders (Quinn, Rutherford, & Leone, 2001). A more recent national survey of youth served in special education in juvenile corrections found rates as high as 72% in one state and rates below 10% in others (EDJJ, 2002).

The variability in prevalence rates and service delivery rates for youth with disabilities is influenced by several factors. These include inadequate special education screening and assessment, inconsistent definitions of disabilities, and difficulty implementing special education pro-

grams in some jurisdictions. These problems are exacerbated by inadequate mechanisms for transfer of records between public schools and correctional institutions (Leone, 1994; Rutherford, Quinn, Leone, Garfinkel, & Nelson, 2002).

Several theories have emerged to explain the over-representation of youth with disabilities in corrections (Rutherford et al., 2002). These include school failure, susceptibility, and differential treatment. The school failure theory posits that juveniles with learning and/or behavior problems perform poorly academically, usually drop out of school, and ultimately become involved in delinquent activity. The susceptibility explanation suggests that characteristics associated with disabling conditions are associated with poor judgment and greater likelihood of involvement in delinquent activity. The differential treatment theory suggests that juveniles with disabilities are treated more punitively at all stages of the juvenile justice system when compared to

their non-disabled peers. Although empirical evidence to support these theories is scant, a significant number of students with disabilities continue to be detained and committed to juvenile correctional facilities. Appropriate educational programming can reduce overrepresentation and assist youth in remaining out of corrections.

### Education and Rehabilitation

Education is an essential component of treatment and rehabilitation for incarcerated youth and is the foundation for programming in many juvenile institutions (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1994). Helping youth acquire educational skills is also one of the most effective approaches to the prevention of delinquency and the reduction of recidivism. Literacy skills are an essential component of education to meet the demands of a complex, high-tech world. Higher levels of literacy are associated with lower rates of juvenile delinquency, rearrest, and recidivism.

While illiteracy and poor academic performance are not direct causes of delinquency, empirical studies consistently demonstrate a strong link between marginal literacy skills and the likelihood of involvement in the juvenile justice system. Most incarcerated youth lag

two or more years behind their age peers in basic academic skills, and have higher rates of grade retention, absenteeism, and suspension or expulsion. For example, a national study found that more than one-third of incarcerated adolescents read below the 4th grade level (Project READ, 1978). The negative consequences of marginal literacy extend beyond the greatly heightened risk for incarceration in adolescence, to poverty and unemployment in adulthood. The rate of poverty among those in the labor force without a high school diploma is approximately three times that of high school graduates (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2001; Wm. T. Grant Foundation, 1989). Eighteen to twenty-three year olds least proficient in the basic skills of reading and mathematics are more likely to be unemployed, living in poverty, and not enrolled in any type of schooling.

During the 25 years since passage of the IDEA, many juvenile correctional facilities have developed special education services for youth with disabilities. However, in a number of jurisdictions, services have not been available, or become available only after litigation and protracted struggle between advocates for youth and the agency operating the correctional institution. Education services for youth with disabilities in juvenile correction settings are

shaped by institutional practices and policies and by the academic and vocational curriculum in the facility. Appropriate special education services for youth with disabilities include implementation of instructional strategies to address learning or behavioral problems; involvement of parents, guardians, or surrogates; and provision of transition services for youth released to the community. In addition, disciplinary accommodations for youth with disabilities need to identify whether or not behavioral problems are a manifestation of a disabling condition. Youth with learning disabilities, emotional or behavioral disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and developmental disabilities are more likely to have difficulty complying with and responding to rules and regulations within corrections. For example, when facility staff do not receive training to help them work effectively with incarcerated youth with disabilities, the characteristics typically associated with ADHD, including impulsivity, difficulty following directions, and poorly developed problem-solving skills, may be interpreted as defiance or hostility that warrants disciplinary sanctions.

Youth with disabilities who do not receive appropriate special education and related services may receive more disciplinary infractions for alleged misbehavior and be more vulnerable to disciplinary confinement and to exclusion from the correctional educa-

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tion program (Leone, 1994). Confinement on segregated housing units is a common form of discipline in correctional facilities that often includes temporary removal from education and special education services. When juvenile correctional education programs fail to identify and assess youth suspected of having disabling conditions; fail to develop or implement IEPs (individualized education programs), or provide accommodations within education programs, they violate both state and federal statutes and regulations for special education services.

Unfortunately, the lack of attention to the educational rights of delinquent youth is part of a disturbing trend in corrections to provide youth with minimal services. In recent years, advocates have initiated class-action litigation to challenge inadequate educational practices in juvenile correctional facilities in over 20 states (Leone & Meisel, 1997). Although rates of juvenile offending continue to decline (Snyder, 1998) the media's negative portrayal of troubled youth distorts the extent and nature of delinquency and may also erode public support for correctional education programs. While appropriate education services are provided to incarcerated youth in some states, many jurisdictions struggle to implement appropriate education programs in juvenile corrections.

### **Jails, Detention Centers, and Other Short-term Facilities**

The average length of stay for juveniles committed to publicly operated juvenile correctional facilities is about 6 months, but for youths detained in jails, detention centers, and other short-term facilities the average length of stay is just 37 days (Snyder & Sickmund, 1999). Effective education programs in

short-term facilities should focus on literacy, life skills training, and an extensive diagnostic system for the educational, vocational, and social, emotional, and behavioral assessment of youths. With regard to literacy, educators in detention centers and jails need to use a range of materials and strategies to ensure that all youth have successful experiences in the classroom. For example, newspapers, driver education manuals, popular magazines and song lyrics all contain information that most adolescents find interesting. Similarly, life skills training on topics such as alcohol and other drug use, sexually transmitted diseases, legal rights and responsibilities, and career exploration, can provide content for stimulating presentations and discussions in a detention center classroom.

In detention centers and jails where the lengths of stay are highly variable and student turnover is high, a short-term curriculum based on literacy, life skills, and comprehensive assessment can be structured to permit students with a wide range of ability levels to receive quality education services. Teachers can break activities into units that may last a day or two and that provide the opportunity for students at differing achievement levels to experience success. The education program in a short-term facility can also provide a positive school experience for youth who may have very negative feelings about their educational programs prior to incarceration.

### **Training Schools and Other Long-term Facilities**

In contrast to programs in short-term facilities, education programs in training schools or long-term facilities need to offer a comprehensive range of programs and options for youth. At a minimum, correctional education programs in long-term fa-

cilities need to provide:

- Literacy and functional skills instruction for students with significant cognitive, behavioral, or learning problems;
- Special education services and supports;
- Academic courses associated with Carnegie units (or units of instruction that meet state standards) for students likely to return to public schools or who may earn a diploma while incarcerated;
- GED preparation and testing for students not likely to return to public schools; and
- Pre-vocational and vocational education related to student interests and meaningful employment opportunities in the community.

### **Special Education in Juvenile Corrections**

Although incarcerated youth eligible for special education services are entitled to the same substantive and procedural rights afforded to youth in public schools, correctional facilities have been slow to respond to the requirements of the IDEA, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act, and other applicable laws. Since passage of the IDEA in 1975, (formerly known as PL 94-142 and the Education for All Handicapped Children Act), the predominant concern in public schools has shifted from providing access to special education services to ensuring quality outcomes for youth with disabilities. In contrast, providing basic access to adequate special education services continues to be a challenge in many juvenile correctional facilities.

While nearly all states have compulsory attendance laws and provide education services through local school districts (Morris, 1980), children with disabilities are entitled to

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special education services through federal legislation and corresponding state statutes or regulations. The IDEA, through the spending power of Congress, mandates that states receiving federal support for education of students with disabilities, ensure that all eligible students receive a free appropriate public education. IDEA was landmark legislation in that it granted to parents of children with disabilities and those suspected of having disabilities, procedural and substantive rights concerning the assessment, identification, and education of their children.

### Identification and Assessment

Under IDEA, children with disabilities are defined as having “mental retardation, hearing impairments, including deafness, speech or language impairments, visual impairments including blindness, emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, specific learning disabilities, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities.” To be eligible for special education services under this definition, students must: (1) have one or more of the identified disabilities; and (2) the disability must adversely affect his or her education.

Specifically, IDEA requires that public schools and state-operated programs, such as juvenile correctional facilities, base eligibility determinations on nondiscriminatory as-

sessments and parents must consent to the assessment and evaluation process. In order to assess students suspected of having a disability, correctional education programs must obtain parents' permission to evaluate, use a variety of nondiscriminatory assessment tools to conduct the evaluation, and must conduct the evaluation in the child's native language. Timelines vary among jurisdictions; in general, students must be assessed and an eligibility determination meeting must be held no later than 60 days after referral. Students must be reassessed at least once every three years but parents and teachers may request a reevaluation at any time.

Many youth who are detained or committed to juvenile corrections have previously been assessed and identified as eligible for special education services, and were receiving special education and related services in the public schools prior to their incarceration. A difficulty faced by many correctional education programs is the failure of public schools to send records to correctional facilities in a timely manner. Other youth in juvenile corrections have been out of school prior to their incarceration; locating the most recent records for those youth can be difficult. Still other youth in juvenile corrections have never been identified nor referred for special education services in spite of a history of school failure and characteristics that might be associated with disabling conditions.

### IEP Development

Under IDEA, each eligible student is entitled to a Free Appropriate Public Education that involves an Individualized Education Program (IEP) designed to provide “educational benefit” to the student. The program may include related services such as counseling or speech therapy if they are required for the student to benefit from specially designed instruction. Decisions about the type and amount of special education services must be individualized for the unique needs of each eligible student. The IEP should not be based on the type of special education or related services available in the juvenile facility, the availability of space, or administrative convenience. IEPs are nominally developed at a meeting that includes the student, his or her parents or guardian, teachers, and other school representatives. Typically, educators develop a draft of the IEP before the meeting and solicit input from other team members. An IEP should include a statement of the student's current level of educational performance, annual goals, short-term instructional objectives, and special education and related services that will be provided. The anticipated duration of services and criteria and procedures to assess attainment of objectives are also components of the IEP. In addition, the IEP should document the persons in attendance at the meeting convened to discuss eligibility and develop the IEP.

Reauthorization of IDEA in 1990

included transition requirements which were defined as goals and a coordinated set of activities that promote movement from school to post-school activities. For youth age 14, transition goals must identify necessary course work and at age 16, goals related to post-secondary school and/or work should be included in each IEP. These postschool activities include: post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment, continuing edu-

This team generally includes the youth, special educators, general educators, related services personnel, family members, and community agency personnel. The team is instrumental in developing IEPs that include transitional services and goals, and providing appropriate educational, vocational, and related services to juveniles with disabilities.

Students incarcerated in short-term detention centers are entitled to the education services specified on

confined to their care and custody. Lack of adequate space, overcrowding, insufficient fiscal resources, and ineffective governance all interfere with providing appropriate education services to youth (Leone, Price, & Vitolo, 1986). Too many correctional education programs have unqualified and underpaid teachers who are isolated from the public schools and who do not have access to adequate professional development opportunities. Lack of collaboration among

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cation, adult services, and independent living or community participation. These activities must take into account the individual student's needs, preferences, and interests. They must include instruction, community experiences, post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, the acquisition of daily living skills.

Transition from a correctional facility to the community requires additional supports from correctional education staff, personnel from the public schools, and other community-based programs such as mental health and social services. The quality of educational and vocational services for students becomes contingent upon successful interagency collaboration. Transition services need to be developed and implemented by the IEP or transition team. This team engages in a systematic process of decisionmaking that includes determining eligibility for special education services, planning for appropriate placement in cooperation with correctional counselors and other staff.

their IEPs. Rather than going through a lengthy process of developing a new IEP, existing IEPs that approximate the level and type of services previously provided can be implemented in detention settings after review and discussion by the team.

### Meeting the Challenges

Problems implementing quality academic programs within juvenile corrections are frequently associated with characteristics of incarcerated youth, the operation of the facilities, and the quality of connections between the public schools and the correctional education program. Youth enter correctional settings with skill deficits, behavior problems, and substance abuse issues that present difficulties in educational programming. At the same time, juvenile correctional institutions often have limited capacity to support appropriate educational interventions for the youth

treatment, security, and education staff within juvenile correctional facilities compounds other problems (Meisel, Henderson, Cohen, & Leone, 1998). Another difficulty associated with providing education services and special education services in correctional settings is the myriad of administrative and funding mechanisms governing education for incarcerated juveniles across the United States (Wolford, 2000). Without adequate staff and support, the education services frequently fail to meet the minimal standards required by IDEA and related state statutes and regulations (Leone & Meisel, 1997; Leone, 1994).

Education services, whether operated by a juvenile corrections agency, the state department of education, or a local school district, are a low priority for many correctional administrators. In order to provide education services for youths with disabilities, juvenile corrections programs need to meet minimum standards associated with public school programs. Under current arrangements,

the infrastructure needed to support quality education programs is missing in many jurisdictions. Correctional education programs, with some exceptions, often do not have the autonomy, administrative arrangements, and fiscal resources necessary to provide a quality education to incarcerated youths. In order to strengthen programs and ensure eligible youths receive special education services, correctional education programs need to 1) develop stronger ties to public school programs, 2) have fiscal and administrative autonomy from the correctional agency, and 3) meet standards associated with public school programs. In addition, correctional education pro-

speaker telephone, and selection and training of parent surrogates can be very effective. With regard to identification of youth with disabilities, mental health and line staff in correctional facilities may recognize youths' special needs and can contribute important information to the screening and referral process for special education.

Youth in juvenile corrections are entitled to appropriate education services by state and federal statutes. More importantly though, appropriate services that assist youth with disabilities become academically more competent, spark a career interest, or provide new possibilities for the future, have the potential to help youth escape from a dead-end cycle of de-

education services in juvenile corrections, quality programs have been developed in some facilities. Several studies provide evidence that incarcerated students with a history of school failure, disabilities, and poorly developed academic skills can make significant achievement gains with intensive instruction in a short period of time (Malmgren & Leone, 2000; Drakeford, 2001). Correctional institutions can support education by making reading and literacy a high priority, providing opportunities for students to do homework on the living units, inviting community members to serve as mentors to youth, and celebrating academic achievements, both large and small, of their

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grams should be included in monitoring and oversight activities of special education services that are conducted by state departments of education.

While special education policies and guidelines developed by state and local education agencies may be more applicable to community schools than to correctional facilities, strategies are available to ensure that incarcerated youth with disabilities receive the services they need and to which they are entitled (Rutherford et al, 2002). For example, meaningful parental involvement in IEP meetings is difficult when youth are incarcerated far from their homes, but alternative methods such as scheduling the meetings to coincide with facility visitation schedules, use of a

linquency and failure. Well-developed and adequately supported academic programs can assist some youth in becoming literate and other youth consider post-secondary education and training. Pre-vocational and vocational programs can expose youth to job options, teach employability skills, and provide entry-level training.

**D**espite compelling evidence that increased literacy skills promote pro-social outcomes, education programs in many juvenile correctional facilities are inadequate. Appropriate educational services in juvenile corrections may not be a priority when the school program and security functions have to compete for limited resources. In spite of a host of problems associated with

students.

Educational attainment is highly correlated with rates of re-offending (Center on Crime, Communities, and Culture, 1997). Higher levels of academic competence are associated with lower rates of recidivism. Communities and courts that are serious about keeping delinquent youth from re-offending and out of adult corrections, will ensure that the education programs in juvenile corrections meet statutory requirements and enable youth to develop new skills. While these steps will not deter all youth from further troubles, well-developed education programs for youth with disabilities and other students in juvenile corrections, will ensure that fewer youth persist in criminal behavior.

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Internet resources

- EDJJ: The National Center on Education, Disability and Juvenile Justice, <http://www.edjj.org>, is a training, technical assistance and research project that provides full-text publications and other resources on delinquency prevention, educational programming for incarcerated youth, and transition services.
- OSEP: The Office of Special Education Programs in the U. S. Department of Education, <http://www.osep.gov>, provides copies of the IDEA and extensive information on special education policies and practices.

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Credits

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# Performance Assessment in Juvenile Correction Education Programs

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## Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to understand and describe the impact of implementing performance assessment on secondary students in facilities designed for adjudicated youth using a case study design. A social studies teacher and math teacher evaluated academic understanding of content standards through performance assessment. Twenty male students were involved in the study, ranging in age from twelve to eighteen. Data collection involved gathering observational notes and conducting semi-structured, open-ended interviews with students and faculty. Results of the study found all students were able to receive a passing grade on their performance assessment and student perceptions were positive. Elements embedded in the performance assessment that led to student success and satisfaction included addressing different learning styles with non-linguistic activities, setting small goals and individualizing assignments. When properly implemented, students enjoyed the performance assessment, were motivated by it, and believed they had an easier time retaining the information.

In the United States all students are guaranteed a free and appropriate public education, including students receiving their education in a juvenile correctional facility. The importance of receiving an appropriate education is highlighted in a study conducted by the Center on Crime, Communities and Culture (Spectrum, 1998). The study found that the rates of recidivism for adult offenders was very high, ranging from 41% to 60%. The study noted that "according to the Federal Bureau of Prisons, there is an inverse relationship between recidivism rates and education. The more education received, the less likely an individual is to be re-arrested or re-imprisoned." The report went on to recommend quality education for juvenile offenders, the rationale being that the earlier the intervention, the greater the impact (Spectrum, 1998). This data is corroborated by research that shows a correlation between more serious offenses being committed by individuals with

larger deficits in basic skills as compared to moderate offenses more often committed by individuals with higher academic achievement (Archwamety & Katsiyannis, 2000).

Adjudicated youth are a particular challenge to teach (Gunter & Reed, 1997). Students in juvenile correction facilities often fall far below their academic grade level. In the content areas, reading is of special concern, with the national average reading level for adjudicated youth being third grade. In fact, an extremely large proportion of adjudicated youth are functionally illiterate (Curcio, 1995). For these students the education provided by the correctional facility is their last bastion, it is their final opportunity to gain academic knowledge and skills.

Conventional wisdom has been to emphasize basic skills such as phonics, spelling, and math facts; the assumption being these skills would best serve them in the real world. This commonly held belief resulted in an

emphasis on basic skills, while neglecting higher level thinking skills and problem solving activities in the curriculum scope and sequence. According to a study done by the U.S. Department of Education of four correctional facilities, a change in the paradigm is recommended. Along with basic skills there is a need for a "focus ... on comprehension and problem-solving relevant to life outside the institution" (Pfannenstiel, 1993).

The state of Minnesota, where this research was done, has made great effort and progress in implementing a standards based education curriculum into its regular schools. Content standards have been articulated in every content area and are evaluated through performance assessment. In accordance with Minnesota law all students must meet standards in their educational curriculum and these standards must be evaluated through performance assessment. This state requirement extends to students in correctional facilities (Minnesota Chil-

The purpose of performance assessment is to include the abilities to read, write, problem solve, and apply knowledge to meaningful tasks in real life situations.

dren, Families, and Learning, 2001). Inclusion of adjudicated youth in the standards movement is considered to be one of the greatest challenges facing educators (Johnson, Kimball, Brown, & Anderson, 2001).

Performance assessment differs from standardized testing in that standardized tests focus on facts and rote memorization, while performance assessment focuses on higher level thinking skills and problem solving. The purpose of performance assessment is to include the abilities to read, write, problem solve, and apply knowledge to meaningful tasks in real life situations. The following elements are included in performance assessment: collaboration, higher level thinking skills, individualization for student aptitudes, interests, learning styles, presentation to an audience, and they are administered over an extensive period of time (Woolfolk, 2001). The purpose of this research study was to understand and describe the impact of performance assessment on secondary students in a facility designed for adjudicated youth using a case study design.

## Method

### Sample

The sample group involved in this case study was incarcerated at a correctional facility in rural Minnesota. Twenty students participated in the study. All students were male, ranging from 12 to 18 years of age. Students were placed

in the program from the states of Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Iowa. The average offender stay was nine months. The most common offenses giving rise to students being sentenced to this facility were drug dealing, rape, and grand theft auto.

The average reading level of the students involved in the study was second grade seven months. Two-thirds of the students had been identified as having special needs and had been placed on an Individualized Education Program (IEP). An IEP is a legal document included in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that ensures the education program will be individualized to meet special education students' needs. The large proportion of students on IEPs in this facility is commensurate with national numbers in correctional facilities (Archwamety & Katsiyannis, 2000).

### Instrumentation

Data was collected by gathering observational notes and conducting a semi-structured, open-ended interview with students and faculty in two subject areas, social studies and math. The social studies teacher had over ten years of teaching experience, this was her first year in a correctional facility. The performance assessment she implemented was in the area of geography. Students were to demonstrate an understanding of regions of the world. The math teacher had begun his teaching career one year

prior to this research. The performance assessment undertaken in the area of math dealt with chance and data handling.

A protocol for observation was designed to record a portrait of the subjects, reconstruction of conversations, and an account of specific events and activities. The purpose of these observations was to discover what actually happened in the classroom. How were the performance assessments organized? How did the teachers and students act? What activities and discussions ensued? The observations not only illuminated what happened in each class, they also assisted in designing the interview questions.

The interview schedule was designed specifically for this study and consisted of ten items. Using the interview schedule ensured specific information would be gathered, a semi-structured approach was employed to allow for follow-up responses. Depending on the subject's response, the researcher asked additional questions to probe deeper responses and increase the richness of the data. The interviews aided in determining participants' perspectives on their educational experience with performance assessment, an effort was made to go beyond reporting the details of their experience to a discussion of their feelings and thoughts. During the second interview the researcher made an effort to clarify and follow-up on discussions from the initial interview. This process is in line with qualitative research's purpose of revealing meaning with

an exploratory and descriptive focus. It was a flexible and evolving emergent research design.

A content analysis was done of the student interviews, teacher interviews, and observations. As categories emerged they were coded. As the research progressed patterns and relationships were discovered.

## Procedure

Observations and interviews were conducted beginning in April, 2001 and continued over a four month period, ending in July, 2001. Each room was observed twice for a forty minute period while the performance assessment was being implemented. Teachers and students were interviewed twice, once midway through the performance assessment and once at the conclusion of the performance assessment. Interviews took place in the correctional facility and field notes were taken during the interviews. Each teacher interview took one hour. All twenty students were interviewed individually, and each interview lasted approximately twenty minutes.

## Results

1. All students were able to receive a passing grade on their performance assessment, implying that students in correctional facilities are capable of succeeding at performance assessment. Elements embedded in performance assessment give clues as to ways these students will achieve aca-

demically. These strategies include addressing different learning styles with non-linguistic activities, creating small goals, and individualizing assignments.

Students liked the hands-on nature of performance assessment. While reading was still an intricate part of instruction, much of the material was delivered non-linguistically. Research has shown this increases academic achievement in regular K-12 schools (Armstrong, 1994; Marzano, 2001), so it was interesting to note that this also positively impacted students in correctional facilities. By watching videos, working with maps, and creating maps students had the opportunity to approach the subject matter in a variety of ways. When reading was required it was primarily done as a group; a proper strategy, because so many of the boys had difficulty reading.

The social studies teacher believed the students were taking the activity very seriously. She said, "Replacing the reading with hands-on activities was great, because they are such poor readers. They have gotten more from discussions and drawing and maps than from just reading." When students were asked their reaction to the activity one boy said, "I loved drawing, learned a lot about it, I usually have trouble remembering things... Liked handson things, don't like reading so much 'cause [I] can't read well."

In fused into the handson instruction was an element of creativity. The creativity the performance assess-

ment invited was a motivator and allow students a freedom to express themselves. The teacher commented, "They really enjoy the artistic freedom versus the structure of some lessons."

The math teacher employed hands-on instruction; using items such as calculators, spinners, computers, and baseball cards with statistics. Unfortunately, this was not met with success, largely due to the fact there was not enough equipment for everyone. Not having an adequate number of calculators frustrated students, particularly when they were required to find the mean and standard deviation. Integrating technology into the performance assessment was a positive strategy, but students were not adequately supervised on the computers, which led to visiting pornographic sites. The teacher commented, "When we were writing on computers some went to 'romance sites,' which is an inappropriate site."

Breaking the performance assessment into smaller attainable assignments enabled students to set reasonable goals for themselves. Goal setting enhances academic success for all students (Marzano, Pickering, Pollock, 2001), but it is particularly important for adjudicated youth. Juvenile correctional facilities have a continual turnover of students. Many students enter the facility midway through a content unit or are released or reassigned before they complete a unit. Small goals allow everyone to have a sense of accomplishment. Even students that are in attendance for an entire unit, small goals are more attainable, as op-

**Goal setting enhances academic success for all students, but it is particularly important for adjudicated youth.**



posed to being overwhelmed by an entire project.

The social studies instructor broke the performance assessment into segments, explaining each task to the students as they progressed. In this way students had small goals and could chart their progress. One boy commented, "Liked learning new things about a new country. I like drawing the maps and the worksheet. Learned a lot, nothing didn't like. It was fun."

Much of the frustration of the math students came from feeling like there was no end to the project. The teacher began by reading directions for the entire performance assessment, which was going to amount to approximately a month of work for the students. This instantly overwhelmed students. When asked students' perception of this activity, the communal response was "it was hard." One student seemed to speak for the others by saying, "hated it, boring, took too long."

Finding the appropriate academic level and individualizing assignments was imperative if the teacher was going to challenge students, but not frustrate them. The math teacher was unable to find the correct level of math for his students and made no effort to individualize the curriculum. The teacher did very little groundwork before attempting this project and then failed to properly individualize the tasks. This created a very unpleasant classroom climate, not conducive to academic gains. Anxiety was further increased when students were required to work with over one hundred numbers when finding mean, median, and standard deviation. This resulted in students giving up or allowing one or two students to do the work for the entire class. One boy said, "Didn't understand it. Didn't make graph, partner did. Liked rolling the dice, but took a long time to learn anything." Others

also commented on the length of the assignment.

When interviewed the teacher voiced his concern, "People at different levels, the project took a life of its own, some didn't understand standard deviation, variance, or mean. Didn't have enough calculators so some gave up. Some made gains, next time they'll do better; others probably have a bad taste in their mouth for stats." A student voiced his dissatisfaction, "Some could have moved ahead and others worked on it. Had to roll the dice so many times people were cheating. Didn't like anything about it. Baseball cards were all right. I want to work in the math packets. Took a whole month."

The frustration felt by the students ultimately affected classroom management. The teacher commented, "Some wanted [math] packets back, this is out of their routine, have trouble seeing where this relates to them. Harder for discipline because out of routine." This teacher consistently had the most discipline problems and issues with students when compared to all teachers at the correctional facility. This became more serious during this activity, the level of difficulty could be seen in the fact that line-staff began "bribing" the boys with soda-pop if they'd behave during the class.

Social studies on the other hand was able to individualize the project, students were able to investigate the topic of their choice in the geographic region. The teacher also guided students to complex or simple concepts and processes in geography according to their ability. The teacher said, "They were very enthusiastic and really enjoyed learning about the Alps, the Mediterranean Sea, and other geographical and cultural information about Italy. They will always have a mental map of Italy the boot and Sicily the rock the boot is kicking. A student said, "Liked mak-

ing maps and flags. Liked choosing what kind of map and each having own map to do."

2. A fundamental element of performance assessment is collaboration, which was a challenge in the juvenile correction education program. Students had a great deal of difficulty working cooperatively without direct teacher supervision. In both the social studies and math classes it was necessary for students to work independently in order to avoid management problems and ensure productivity.

3. Performance assessment involves presenting to an audience. These students generally have few opportunities to be recognized for their work. As a culminating activity students shared the information depicted on their map with the rest of the class and other teachers. Students were eager to place their maps on the walls and show others what they had produced. The social studies teacher commented on student reaction to showing their maps to fellow students, line-staff, and teachers in the program, "Positive reinforcement came when they shared their maps with others; they were eager to show it off. [It was a] positive learning experience for the students. Creative, imaginative activities."

### Implications

Much of what is true about best practice in teaching applies both to a juvenile correction education program and a regular classroom. Teacher training is imperative, teachers must be equipped with the knowledge and the materials to implement performance assessment. It is my observation that the social studies teacher was an excellent teacher who designed well-constructed lessons that were interactive. This set the stage for a smooth transition into perfor-

performance assessment. The teacher approached this new endeavor with a very positive attitude. She coupled that with putting a great deal of time and effort into preparation. It is not surprising that her students met success.

The math teacher on the other hand was ill-equipped to deliver performance assessment in his classroom. He neither had the prior knowledge, nor did he have the materials to implement the performance assessment. This resulted in frustration for the students and the teacher. Teacher in-service on performance assessment, and more time given to preparation would have enabled the teacher to deliver instruction in a more suitable fashion.

Instructional strategies infused in performance assessment met with student satisfaction. Students profited from receiving instruction non-linguistically.

Many had already failed in traditional schools that heavily emphasized reading and writing, so including visuals and hands-on activities complemented the varied learning styles. Setting small goals and dividing activities into smaller parts assisted students in charting their own success. Individualizing work enabled individual academic abilities and interests to be accommodated.

Teachers and students commented on the lack of routine when implementing a performance assessment. This was disturbing to some students; many of whom found a true comfort in the routine of traditional instruction methods, in particular the individualized lesson packet. A balance needs to be found between the comfort of routine and exploring new strategies.

Due to the collaborative nature of

performance assessment, integrating social skills training into the content areas would be beneficial. Most students in correctional facilities are receiving anger management training, individual therapy, and group therapy. Performance assessment affords a perfect opportunity to incorporate, in a concerted manner, social skills in the academic setting.

When implemented correctly, students enjoyed the performance assessment, were motivated by it, and believed they had an easier time retaining the information. When executed poorly, it frustrated students, few academic gains were made, and there were more discipline problems than with traditional class activities. Ultimately, there is a place for standards to be evaluated through performance assessment in juvenile correction education programs.

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# Cornerstone Design/Building Project

## Alameda County

MIKE BECKETT

### Program Description

Alameda County is offering a new program for alternative education students that provides training in architectural design skills. At the beginning of the 2002-03 school year, the Alameda County Office of Education, in association with the Cornerstone Foundation for Education Achievement (CFEA), began a series of classes at Camp Sweeney Education Center, a medium-term (six to nine months) camp setting operated by the Alameda County Probation Department. In this performance-based pilot project, two teams of seven students were selected to participate in a simulation in which they factored political and financial considerations into the selection, planning and construction of a building project. The culminating project was the submission of a scale model of the building based upon draft design plans.

The classes were scheduled 4 times a week for 12 weeks, and were staffed by practicing architects and engineers, as well as two college architect majors acting in "mentor" support roles. In the process of completing their de-

signs, students learned principles of architecture, engineering, real estate development, city and urban planning, and construction management. In addition to guest speakers, two instructors provided operational and instructional support: an Educational Advisor (Teresa Coffino), a regular teacher with the Alameda County Office of Education providing in-kind support, and an Architectural Advisor (Charles Brown), a construction project manager with the Alameda County General Services Agency. The Architectural Advisor provided students with the skills needed to construct their design projects, sequencing instruction based upon an industry-modeled construction schedule. Both advisors worked closely with CFEA Director Nicole Johnson, who provided administrative oversight to the program, coordinated the participation of all guest speakers and facilitators, and provided general operational support through the distribution of materials, supplies and field trips.

The Cornerstone Project is the result of a shared commitment related to the planning of the new

Alameda County Juvenile Hall/Courthouse Complex slated for construction in 2004-05. During the planning sessions for the project, involved agencies stipulated a hiring preference for ex-juvenile offenders to participate in the design and/or elements of construction. Since groundbreaking is set to begin in 2004-05, an essential first step was to develop a program to train students who were already incarcerated and attending a school program. Camp Sweeney was selected as a program location due to the age of the students and the duration of their school enrollment.

An additional feature of the program is the multiple-agency support and commitment to both the development of the course itself, and later training and employment. Though the first year is yet to be completed, planning has begun for pre-apprentice training support for program graduates at the Mandela Project in Oakland, as well as GSA supported plans for student involvement in contracted projects throughout Alameda County.

### Contact Information

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# Grizzly Technical Academy

## San Luis Obispo County

JEANNE DUKES AND JODI PETERS

### Program Description

The Grizzly Technical Academy (GTA), a partnership between the California National Guard and the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education, was established to help Grizzly Youth Academy (GYA) graduates avoid both dependency on social service organizations and involvement in the criminal justice system. Students are eligible for GTA if they have graduated from the Grizzly Youth Academy, are age 17-19, have not earned a high school diploma, and are interested in a challenging academic and technical residential program. It is free to those eligible students; the process to apply is competitive.

Over the past five years, staff members recognized that the six-month residential program sometimes was not long enough for students from particularly difficult homes or situations to feel comfortable about not reverting back to their previous bad habits. Upon graduation from the Grizzly Youth Academy, students were often hesitant to return to their homes. In addition, of approximately 220 GYA graduates each year, typically 50-55 return to former negative lifestyles due to a lack of positive options. Often, these graduates are unable to pass the GED, are behind academically, and face challenges in entering the workforce. This year, a grant was obtained to allow 25 GYA gradu-

ates to remain at the Academy an additional 6 months (25 per six-month term, 50 per year), providing them with additional time to stay in school and continue on their educational path to a GED or a high school diploma. Students concurrently prepare for industry-based certification exams for CompTIA's A+ and Microsoft Office Specialist for Word and Excel.

GTA's goal is to educate young adults through non-traditional methods: a quasi-military school environment, a world-class computer technology program utilizing virtual learning and educational software, and life and leadership training utilizing academy staff and mentors. Students are in school eight hours per day, four hours studying core subjects and the other four in the computer lab earning technology certification. In addition, the students spend an hour and a half each evening in study hall.

These young people leave GTA better prepared to be successful in today's complex and demanding job market. During the 2002/03 school year, 50 students have had access to the Technical Academy. The success rate is both measurable and impressive: 18 out of 20 graduates in the first class were employed in a technological field full-time upon exiting the program. Additional funding was

secured for the 2003/04 school year to ensure the Technical Academy remains available to Grizzly graduates for an additional two years.

The Grizzly Youth Academy is a rigorous 17-month youth intervention program conducted by the California National Guard in San Luis Obispo. It has been in place for over five years. The program is a partnership between the San Luis County Office of Education, Paso Robles School District, and the California National Guard. Cuesta Community College offers testing for the certification, as well as vocational training.

Unlike "boot camp" programs, GYA (a) is available for teens before they become involved in the criminal justice system; (b) offers a Technical Academy for students who complete GYA, but do not earn a high school diploma and require additional training and support; (c) tracks its graduates for 12 months beyond the residential phase; and (d) assigns adult mentors for one year of aftercare. These factors have encouraged unprecedented success with placement and retention upon the students' return to public high schools, community college, vocational training, jobs and the military. GTA is demonstrating positive outcomes and preventing recidivism in this select group of young people.

### Contact Information

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Contact Jeanne Dukes, SLO County Office of Education at [jdukes@slocoe.org](mailto:jdukes@slocoe.org), or Jodi Peters at [jpeters@mail.slocs.k12.ca.us](mailto:jpeters@mail.slocs.k12.ca.us). You may also call the school at (805) 594-6590, or visit the county office website at [www.slocoe.org](http://www.slocoe.org).

# Annual Academic Bowl Competition

## Los Angeles County

JANET ADDO

### Program Description

The Division of Juvenile Court and Community Schools (JCCS), part of the Los Angeles County Office of Education-Educational Programs, began its annual Academic Bowl competition over a decade ago and the competition continues to be one of the most exciting and successful yearly events. The purpose of this annual competition is to afford an opportunity for adjudicated youth to compete in an academic setting similar to the nationally recognized Academic Decathlon. It is designed to also systematically raise the academic achievement and competition level of students in court schools and residential programs.

Each year, every JCCS school site coaches at least two (2) teams to compete at the local level and the winners of the local competition are invited to compete at the finals. In 2002, the JCCS Academic Bowl was held at the Riordan Central Library, where four teams (5 members each) competed in front of an audience of over 200 people. This event attracted Los Angeles County Supervisor representatives, Board Members, and local dignitar-

ies, as well as parents, guardians and educators from throughout the Los Angeles County.

The theme for 2002 was, "Twenty First Century: Soaring Solutions." The competition focused on solving mathematical and algebraic problems and creating a technological product highlighting the historical aspects of Algebra. The final competition included a spelling bee, on-line computer-adapted super quiz and a PowerPoint presentation prepared by the students. Each of these events was presented by teams of five students and judged by a panel of distinguished judges.

A celebration luncheon was catered to honor the winning teams. Prizes were provided to all team members and trophies were presented at the luncheon.

The Academic Bowl 2002 was filmed by student apprentices, and a video has been produced and made available. The video is an instructional tool to share with all students who will be competing in subsequent years to illustrate the

teamwork, academic rigor, accountable talk, clear expectations and preparation necessary to compete and receive the rewards of success.

Students and coaches are currently preparing for the 2003 Academic Bowl "We the People...Our Rights and Responsibilities," which will be held on June 26, 2003.

This has been an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the collaborative effort among Los Angeles County departments and agencies: Probation Department, Children and Family Services, Group Homes, Board of Education members, teachers, students, parents, community and business members.

This event highlights the culmination of an academic year for juvenile court school students and invites all stakeholders to join together in an effort to document the product of countywide curriculum alignment, connectedness and coherence, and to publicly witness academic excellence.

### Contact Information

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Contact Janet M. Addo, Principal and Chair of JCCS Academic Bowl at Masada Residential Community Education Center. Phone: (310) 217-1611 Email: [addojanet@lacoel.edu](mailto:addojanet@lacoel.edu)

## Daniel S. Kern County

If you think you are busy, try having Daniel S.'s schedule. Daniel is concurrently enrolled in Community Learning Center Tech and Bakersfield College. And if that isn't enough to grab your attention, he is also working 20 hours a week at the Boys and Girls Club. How does he do it?

He credits his faith in God and his motivation to be "somebody in life." Today, Daniel is confident that he will accomplish great things in life.

It wasn't always like that, however. Daniel, the oldest of eight children, became involved in gang-related activities and dropped out of high school. During the year that Daniel was out of school, he experienced a lot of violence and he became increasingly apathetic about his life. But a twist of fate redirected him. One day, while he was sitting outside of his apartment, alone, and "high as a kite," as he put it, some guys drove by and stopped right in front of him. They flashed a gun in his direction, made direct eye contact, and then drove off. He rushed into his home, kicked in his mother's bedroom door, took her shotgun and loaded it. He put it by the front door because he was determined to protect his family. When his parents came home and

discovered what had happened, they took the shotgun from him. Then they called the police, and Daniel was arrested.

Being incarcerated was a turning point for Daniel. He had a lot of time to think. He went to church a couple times in juvenile hall and that experience affected him profoundly. He also said, "I didn't like being told when to eat, when to take showers, where to walk and how to walk." He vowed that when he got out, he would never go back to jail.

He credits several people for believing in him and helping him to keep his vow during the past two years. His teacher at Sandstone Academy (a non-residential court school) genuinely motivated him and showed him how to start caring, again, for people and for his own life. The principal made Daniel feel welcome, secure and worthwhile. The probation officers on campus, though tough, encouraged him, helped him to set goals and gave him the "push" he needed to achieve his potential. The instructional aide also helped Daniel to stay focused by offering words of encouragement and understanding.

The transition from street life to school wasn't easy, and there were many opportunities for Daniel to go back to his old ways. In spite of this, however, Daniel made the decision that he wasn't going to disappoint all of the people who believed in him. Besides, he wanted to become a role model for his younger siblings.

JobsPlus!, through Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds, helped Daniel interact with people and gave him the opportunity to build his job skills. His confidence slowly began to blossom as he worked with the WIA staff and various employers. Daniel went from being very quiet and reserved to being the person who represents JobsPlus! in public speaking engagements. While enrolled during the past two years Daniel has worked in many different job assignments, including the Kern County Superior Courts and Boys and Girls' Club. He has earned approximately \$4,500 during this time, and, best of all, the Boys and Girls Club is now offering a part-time job to Daniel while he finishes his high school and college education. He has become an inspiration, not only to his family and friends, but to all who have come to know him.

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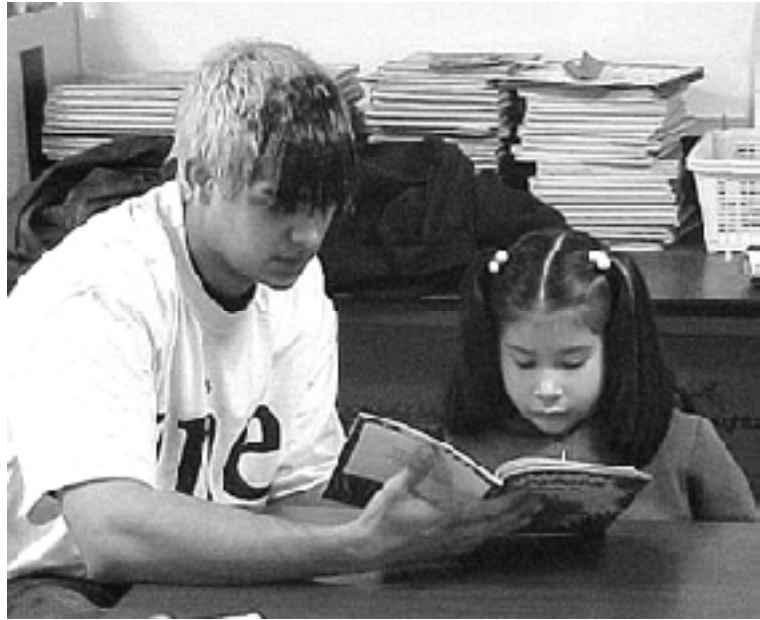
Submitted by Cathie Poochigian, Coordinator, Kern County

## Steffan Randle San Joaquin County

**S**teffan Randle is a young man born with a partial hearing loss. He subsequently developed a speech impediment. Elementary and middle schools were rewarding for him but high school proved to be a challenge. He and his twin brother were expelled from traditional high school for fighting and he was previously on probation for tagging. They started in the one. Program two years ago.

The one. Program is San Joaquin County Office of Education's Alternative Education program, which includes nearly 30 community schools. The sites each have two to three teachers with a 20:1 student ratio. Many sites have a specific focus. Steffan and his brother chose to attend one. Artworks, where the focus is on visual arts. Steffan's artistic talent flourished and helped make him comfortable at this site.

Last year when Steffan learned that his whole site would participate in Literacy Partners, a cross-age tutoring program where the Alternative Education students tutor first-graders to read, he questioned his ability to do so. As he wrote in his reflection, "I became insecure about the subject because I wondered how someone who has a speech impediment was going to teach someone else to sound out letters and words when he cannot articulate very well himself."



**Steffan Works with Literacy Partner**

Steffan practiced his sounds in isolation, slowly and clearly. When he reviewed the phonics and read with his first-grade partner, Alexis, he found that she understood him just fine. Although he wrote that his "jowls would ache" because he was so intent on pronouncing the words clearly for his partner, he was able to help Alexis read. Steffan has participated in Literacy Partners for two years and has proven to be an invaluable asset to the program. His art was often used in the reading lessons.

Participating in Literacy Partners has helped Steffan realize that he carries many qualities of a good teacher: patience, courage,

initiative, perseverance, and responsibility. Some may consider his partial hearing loss and speech impediment a disability, but he now views it as a way to grow, as demonstrated with his Literacy Partners experience.

Steffan has just graduated from the one. Program. He currently works at a local pizza parlor and is taking two art classes at the community college where his five-hour Monday night graphic arts class flies by. Working as a graphic artist for an advertising firm and then perhaps freelancing, is his career goal. The way Steffan deals with challenges will definitely make him a success in the future!