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Serving as a Committee to the
California County Superintendents
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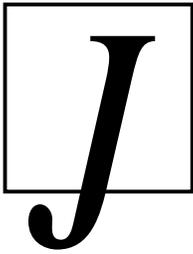
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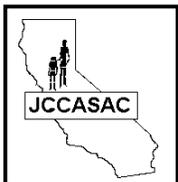
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Thoughts from the President



*by Michael Watkins,
Santa Cruz County Office of Education*

The profound changes that are occurring in the field of alternative education are refreshing, for they have ushered in an unaccustomed way of doing business. Heretofore, the conventional wisdom was that high-risk youth could not achieve or perform at levels commensurate with those of their peers. We now know that isn't the case. Beginning in 2004, all students must meet content standards in order to pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). The educational community is calling for universal access to academic quality, and our programs are delivering.

At the same time, though, some disturbing trends have emerged. Funding is increasingly jeopardized at the state level because of political bias, a misunderstanding of the important role our programs play, and the scarcity of available resources. Locally, it has become increasingly difficult to maintain programs because of the dramatic increase in mandates. Many county programs are facing drastic cuts. Some have already

reduced staff by as much as 45%. Community schools are being closed. Teachers are being laid off.

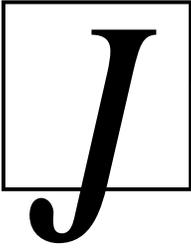
Missing from the discussions around student achievement and the need for county programs is an awareness about the students who arrive at the doorsteps of alternative education programs. Each has unique needs: they are hungry, homeless, gang involved, drug addicted, scarred by years of school failure, victims of abuse, apathetic, or even suicidal.

As programs struggle to balance budgets by closing community schools, one has to wonder what will become of the displaced youngster. The role of JCCASAC is to advocate for this population. We need to fight vociferously for the students who are enrolled in our programs. The costs of education versus incarceration are well documented – the latter being less effective and more expensive, yet fast becoming, by default, the only available placement.

Court and community schools have emerged as integral, statewide educational options for youth. Nearly half of the counties operate programs

that are Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accredited, and many more are currently pursuing accreditation. Most counties have renewed their commitment to literacy, concentrating resources so that all students achieve at high levels. And the focus has now turned to meeting state content standards and helping students pass the CAHSEE.

As administrators of these programs, we need to raise public awareness of the vital services we provide. We need to articulate our vision to both the community and our legislators. As student advocates, we are called upon to advocate for our programs, for adequate funding, and for state and local support. What has taken 25 years to build could easily be destroyed by ignorance and neglect. Let's work together to make sure that doesn't happen.



Thoughts from the President-Elect



by Jeanne Hughes, Kern County Office of Education

It has been an honor to serve this past year as president-elect of the Juvenile Court, Community and Alternative School Administrators of California (JCCASAC), and I am looking forward to stepping up my pace as President in May, 2002. The theme for this year's annual conference is "Alternative Education: The Strongest Link." This theme provides JCCASAC with a clear vision of both our purpose and our mission.

Alternative educators know that alternative education programs provide a separate placement for students who are not successful in traditional settings. Sometimes, the mere change of location allows for a more suitable physical space for the student. Often, however, students in alternative programs need more. Alternative school programs are not "Last Chance" high schools. They are "Best Chance" high schools. As such, alternative schools need to utilize a wide variety of effective instructional strategies, strong curriculum that is presented in shorter increments, smaller class size for extra attention and school safety, teachers and staff with a sincere commitment for working with high-risk

youth, and links to multi-agency support. Alternative programs are successful when administrators incorporate all of the above strategies and resources, and when those are not enough, go the extra mile to keep trying.

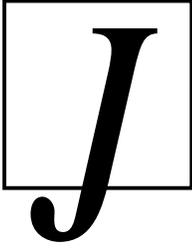
Even though many alternative education programs are relatively short-term in nature, the continuum of placements to these students may result in a stay that is more long-term. Many students may start out in community school programs, but transfer to court school programs if they enter the juvenile justice system or violate probation terms. Often, they return to community school programs upon exiting court schools if their release occurs mid-semester. Alternative programs need a coordinated pattern of instruction and curriculum to ensure that students receive the knowledge and skills necessary to pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). This program should be built on standards and should link the instruction to state curriculum frameworks, core academic skills, productive citizenship and character, education and career pathway development.

JCCASAC is a powerful resource for administrators of county office of education programs for assistance in building and maintaining effective

programs. A new administrator's manual has been developed to assist program operators, and it includes such topics as education codes, audits, eligibility requirements for program entrance, regulations for juvenile halls, and characteristics of effective programs. To support this manual, a directory of court, community, and alternative education programs operated by county offices has been updated for distribution at the annual conference. JCCASAC members are encouraged to contact other program operators for assistance and support and should continue to read *The Journal* for research on effective teaching, innovative programs, and student success stories.

I welcome all of you to this year's conference and would like to commend you for the hard work you do each day. Our students rely on us. We are their link to the future.





*Message from
the Editorial Board*

“**T**hey’re losers. They’re never going to be more than what they are. They don’t belong here.” The woman rambled into the telephone, trying not to pause. Maybe she didn’t want to hear disagreement from the community school administrator to whom she was complaining. Maybe she needed to keep talking to bolster her level of certainty about what she was saying.

The woman had called to complain about a confrontation she’d had with some students. While preparing to walk to the park for physical education, a group of students had allowed a ball to bounce against the window of her workplace. In response, she had stormed outside and venomously announced to the group that they were losers and they didn’t belong there. One student, unable to formulate a verbal rebuttal, spat on the ground next to the woman’s shoe.

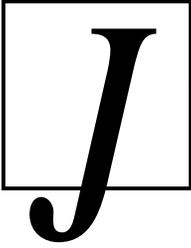
One duty of the community school teacher, of course, is to convince the students who feel ostracized from their community to be tolerant of those who have rejected them. This is no small task. In the wake of the September 11th tragedy, tolerance has become a national priority. At the local level, though, we have some work to do.

Necessarily, our programs have shifted their focus toward meeting standards and raising student achievement. We owe our students a rigorous education. But in this standards-based world, we still need to teach people to be good human beings. We need to continue to prepare ourselves to do both. Our vision has broadened from saving souls to producing emotionally healthy students who can pass the California High School Exit Exam.

by
*Jeannie Griffith
Jeanne Dukes
Hedy Kirsh
Cathie Poochigian
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We have included student writing in this issue in order to keep the student voice at the forefront, and remind ourselves of the challenge before us.

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



Student Voice

I Want To Forget

by Grizzly Youth Academy Charter School Student

Permission was granted to reprint this poem from the National Campaign to Stop Violence. Poem was originally published in the Do The Write Thing Challenge Program 2001. Authorization was not given to publish the author's name.

I want to forget the cold and empty bedroom that my brother and I had shared.

For years, only a mattress, two pillows, and a thin sheet had consumed the little space there was.

I want to forget the looks on our faces, the hours we cried, and the tightening of our tiny, intertwining hands, as the horrid sound of unbearable pain filled our ears from the next room.

I want to forget how we lied on the filthy mattress that we shared when we prayed every night that the arguing, the hunger, and the constant beating would go away.

I want to forget the moments when it seemed impossible to move because our bodies were bruised so badly.

I want to forget my brother's words, "I want to kill him," he said.

I want to forget my agreeing reply, "I wish that he was dead."

I want to forget the gun that my brother gave to me, when I turned ten years old, telling me to protect myself.

I want to forget the first time that I pulled the trigger and the police arrived asking, "Why do you think that your own daughter would attempt to kill her father?"

I want to forget the smirk on my face as I watched the ambulance that carried him disappear.

I want to forget that I hid my face from society, to keep myself from hurting others.

I want to forget the gang that I joined, and the drugs that I sold and used to get through the day.

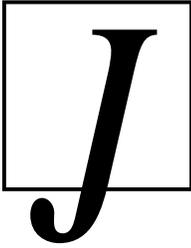
I want to forget the cold cell, the hard floor that I slept on, the constant anxiety attacks, and the straightjacket that I wore like a T-shirt.

I want to forget hating another race, hating myself, and hating my mother.

I want to forget the roar of the police sirens, the feel of handcuffs around my wrists, and the look on my mother's face as I was escorted from my home.

Lastly, I want to forget all of the violence that I've been through.

However, I want to remember that I survived.



*Current Issues
in Alternative Education*

**WORLD CLASS EDUCATION,
WHERE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS:
Next Step - Effective Dropout Recovery**

**By Ted Price
Janice Histon
Karen Bellerose
Lynne Robertson**

County Superintendent of Schools Bill Habermehl has challenged all Department of Education employees to help build a world-class educational program where everyone works together to ensure that every child succeeds (OCDE - Habermehl, 2001). Orange County is very proud of its school districts' high test scores, safe school environments, and low dropout rates. In pursuit of a world-class program in this age of educational reform, much has been written about high test scores, and, as a result of September 11th, there is no greater concern than a safe school for all.

But what about the dropouts? How is that concern being addressed? Although the dropout numbers are low in Orange County [at 2.5%, we are below the California state average and the second lowest of the Class 2 counties in the state (OCDE - Araque, 2002)], we still have a desire to serve all students effectively – to ensure that all students succeed. The fact is, in spite of the many educational reforms that have been made over the past several years, students are still dropping out of school, even in Orange County.

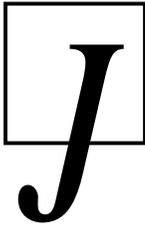
This article is about dropouts, recovering dropouts, and a new program launched by the Alternative Education Division of the Orange County Department of Education to reduce the county dropout rate even further. In this article, we will identify the current issue, describe successful “traditional” dropout recovery programs, and suggest a new mode of delivery to capture, recover, and effectively serve previously “lost” dropouts.

Introduction

Ideally, schools would create seamless systems of support based on every student's needs. However, traditional public high schools have not been able to serve all students effectively, thus the need for county-operated alternative programs, which have served as effective programs for at-risk students. Yet even with existing county alternative programs, at-risk students need more options, more flexible programs, and more and different interventions, because some students are still not experiencing school success. In the historic new law passed on January 8 designed to change the culture of the nation's schools, President Bush says that in order to improve student achievement, “No child shall be left behind” (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). When alternative education determines to provide programs where “all students succeed,” every effort must be made to ensure that all students find a place to be successful.

What Is a Dropout?

Because there are several different definitions of dropouts and various ways to calculate rates, a particular definition or calculation method may be selected to advance a political or policy agenda (West Ed, 2001). For example, the Texas Education Agency, which has published very low state dropout rates, has been criticized for not presenting an accurate picture of the dropout phenomenon in the Texas public schools. Points of



World Class Education, Where Every Student Succeeds: Next Step - Effective Dropout Recovery (cont'd)

criticism included the definition of dropout that was used (it excluded certain groups of students that typically are considered dropouts), the type of calculation employed, and the quality of data received from school districts (Texas Education Agency, 2000). This is a fairly typical problem everywhere – defining the “dropout.” However, even with the most ambitious definition, confusion still reigns, and we know that all states have students who are still not succeeding.

On the national level, for example, roughly one out of every twenty high school students leaves school without graduating (NCES, 1999). The U.S. Department of Commerce - Bureau of Census, reports that graduation rates of 18-24 year olds have decreased. In 1990, 80% of those in the same age group received a high school diploma, and 6% received a GED or non-traditional equivalent. Statistics from 1998 show that 75% received a regular high school diploma, with 10% receiving the GED or non-traditional equivalent. After leading the world for decades, the U.S. now ranks 17th in high school completion among 45 democratic, market-oriented countries (OECD 2000). What is going on?

We know that dramatic changes in the workforce, growth of single-parent families, the movement of women into the labor force, and other factors have led to increasing numbers of children left home alone after school. Working parents of school-age children are spending more hours on the job. A 1997

adolescent time use found that, compared to adolescents who spend up to 20 hours per week in extracurricular activities, students who spent no time doing so were 57% more likely to drop out of school, 49% more likely to use drugs, 37% more likely to be teen parents, 35% more likely to smoke, and 27% more likely to be arrested (Westat, 1995).

Why must we not ignore the dropout? The impact and long-term cost to society of students dropping out of high school is shocking, as a dropout will typically earn approximately \$20,000 annually, as compared to the \$30,000 annual earnings of a high school graduate or \$40,000 typical annual earnings of a college graduate. Young women who leave school early are more likely to receive public assistance because they tend to have children at younger ages, and they are more likely to be single parents. Roughly 80% of prison inmates are dropouts, and each inmate costs the nation about \$28,000 a year. And yet for every dollar spent on education, it costs \$9 to provide social services to dropouts (Facts on Dropouts, 1991). This figure alone justifies the expense for all county-operated at-risk and dropout recovery programs. In spite of whatever intervention is used in the recapture and education of at-risk youth and those who have dropped out, education for all is a wise investment of taxpayer dollars. Dropouts, who are under-prepared for employment, make poor personal choices for engagement in civic life, and diminish our democracy, our society, and their own opportunities (Hispanic Dropout Project, 1998).

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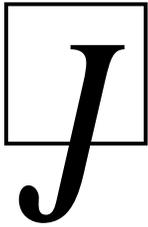
workforce study found that employees spent an average of 44 hours per week working (Families and Work Institute, 1997). As children spend less than 20% of their waking hours in school (Children’s Defense Fund, 1997), there is an estimated gap of 20-25 hours per week between parents’ work schedules and students’ school schedules (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1998). This growth of unsupervised time exposes children to a wide array of dangers. According to the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the rate of juvenile violence is four times greater from 4-7 p.m. than it is from 10 p.m. - 6 a.m., and 57% of all juvenile violence occurs on school days (OJJDP, 1999). Another national study of

Who Are the Dropouts?

Research has shown that multiple factors are associated with dropping out and that it is a long-term process of disengagement that begins in the earliest grades. The NCES (National Center for Education Statistics) as well as private research organizations have identified two types of factors – those associated with families and those related to an individual’s experience in school – that are related to dropping out (U. S. General Accounting Office, 2002).

Students in urban areas are twice as likely to leave school before graduating than non-urban youth. Today’s dropout rate for Hispanics is 2.5 times the rate for blacks and 3.5 times the rate for white non-Hispanics; more than one in four Hispanic youth drop out, with nearly half leaving by the eighth grade. And the situation is more serious than the statistics suggest because they apply to a rapidly growing number of our nation’s students (Hispanic Dropout Project, 1998). We are very concerned in Orange County because almost 50% of the student population is now Hispanic.

Family income also plays a significant role. Among



low-income families, the high school dropout rate for 16-24 year olds in 1995 was 23.2%, as compared to 11.5% for students from middle-income families and 2.9% for students from upper income families (Arizona State University, 2001). Orange County today, with a majority of minority students and where 67 different languages are now spoken, faces many of the challenges brought about by the changing demographics of a state in transition. Orange County, where 10% of the student population are considered English language learners (second in California counties only to Los Angeles County at 37%), is no longer a county whose schools serve only a majority of middle-class white students (California 2001 R-30 Language Census).

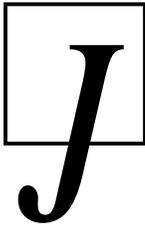
Other categories of students who have a high probability of dropping out are those who are disabled, have dependent children, whose fathers did not complete high school, who have changed schools a number of times or have been retained, those who live with friends or alone, work while attending high school, are male, are married or live in common-law relationships or have been separated or divorced, and/or have parents and friends who do not consider high school to be important (NSTU, 2001). More than half the students who drop out leave by the tenth grade, 20% quit by the eighth grade, and 3% drop out by the fourth grade (OCDE - Histon, Schnell-Cisneros, Perez, 2001). Dropping out of school mitigates a lifetime of opportunities, making these students clearly unprepared to survive in this technological age. And in turn, it is far more likely that their own children will grow up in poverty and be placed at risk, since career and employment prospects for dropouts are dismal (Hispanic Dropout Project, 1998). Youth who have dropped out of school also pose a risk to themselves and society through higher rates of mortality, suicide, and admissions to mental hospitals (Gage, 1990).

What Options Have Been Created for Dropouts?

Alternative educators have created many options that work for at-risk students and aid in dropout recovery. One option that has been adopted by several states and is under serious consideration by many others is raising the mandatory school attendance age to 18, which, it is believed, would help slash dropout rates and keep more students in the classroom at a time when having at least a high school diploma is more important than ever. But if students continue to leave because regular schools aren't meeting their needs, there are going to have to be other options (Gehring, 2002). Studies have shown that time spent in alternative and after-school programs improves

attendance, grades, social skills, and attitudes and results in increased test scores. Significant improvements in achievement have been noted among the most high-risk students, including those initially in the lowest quartile on standardized test scores and English Language Learners (University of California at Irvine, 2002). For example, a 1999 University of Cincinnati study of after-school programs serving over 3,000 children in 17 urban Ohio school districts found that participating students scored above the state average on state proficiency tests, completed homework more often, and improved their class grades (Ohio Hunger Task Force, 1999). In fact, alternative and after-school programs have demonstrated for years that students improve grades even when the program focus isn't academic. In a six-month study of a cultural and recreational after-school program in Baltimore, children were found to have significantly improved reading and math skills over a comparison group (Yale University, 1990). An evaluation of 64 after-school programs in 15 states found that participating children were more cooperative 34% of the time, more interested in recreational reading 33% of the time, and had achieved better grades 33% of the time (Wellesley College, 1997). Research also shows that alternative and after-school programs help improve rates of school attendance and graduation (Wellesley College - Miller, 1995). A 1995 study of nearly 1,000 children participating in Big Brother and Big Sister programs found that the experience was likely to improve school attendance (Johns Hopkins University, 1998). Conversely, a study of nearly 5,000 eighth-graders found that children who took care of themselves for 11 or more hours a week were twice as likely to use alcohol, tobacco, or drugs (Mulhall, et al., 1996). Alternative and after-school programs address affective needs, and by keeping children off the streets and in supervised settings, help to lower crime rates and create safer environments for children, youth, and families. Juvenile crime surges at age 14 and drops off at the age of 18. Experts agree that if a child can get through this period, he or she is more likely to stay out of serious trouble later in life (Alter, 1998).

It is also important to realize that substantial cost savings result from reductions in grade repetitions for students associated with after-school programs. Savings to the state of California related to reduced grade repetition are projected to exceed \$20 million in 2002-2003. Savings in 2001-2002 are projected at more than \$11 million, and additional cost savings related to reduced juvenile crime have been reported by local programs and law enforcement agencies. This cost-effective program is one of the soundest academic intervention and investment programs in California, costing the state only \$1.67



per student hour of participation (University of California at Irvine, 2002).

Which Programs Work for Dropouts?

Effective alternative schools benefit at-risk students by focusing on what research says works: low student-teacher ratios (typically, below 20-1) that enable teachers to build a positive relationship that meets the academic needs of individual students, more time spent on core curricula areas in year-round school settings with minimal time away from school, and smaller high schools with reduced class size. The effects are greatest for low-income and minority students and are prevalent because of the collegial relations between students and adults in alternative education programs (Fine and Somerville, 1998), where the students are actively engaged in school, and the academic focus has definite purpose.

Many “traditional” alternative programs such as the following are offered in Orange County and have helped students to stay in school and to be successful.

Community Schools and Day Centers

Over 50 community schools and day centers are operated by the Alternative Education Division of the Orange County Department of Education, all of which function as dropout recovery centers or play that role for a part of the student population they serve. Currently, community school and day center programs serve approximately 5,051 students on a daily basis. School and classroom solutions in effect at Summit Day Center, one of the larger sites, include: parental involvement, community connections, safe school environment, student/teacher relationship of mutual respect, high expectations, rigorous standards, mentoring, alternative strategies, teacher

“The effects are greatest for low-income and minority students...”

teams, individualized instruction, cooperative learning, continual skill assessment, and tutoring. These services and techniques are provided to students within and beyond their classroom-based instruction. This school serves approximately 200 Hispanic potential dropouts who have been referred to the county from the local school district.

Similar community school sites and day centers are generally located in non-traditional settings such as office

buildings, strip malls, libraries, or community centers. Community schools provide a caring and safe classroom with a credentialed teacher, small class size, established and understood guidelines and expectations, structured discipline, and firmness applied with fairness. Group size is an important consideration in these successful programs, as small groups are most effective when undertaking learning and enrichment activities. Students achieve social and academic success with utilization of independent and peer learning, multi-modal strategies and lesson plans, visual prompts, team competitions, educational games, incentives, reinforcement, and classroom responsibilities. Materials are up-to-date, and there is an emphasis on reading, writing, and math instruction (OCDE - Bellerose, 2001). A curriculum that is standards-based and modeled on the state frameworks is employed.

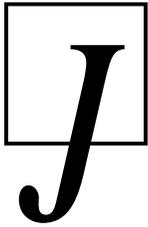
Currently, of the approximately 500,000 K-12 students in Orange County schools, a little over 5,000 (1%) attend a community school or dropout recovery center. These programs serve a small percentage of the total student population; however, they make a big impact on the students who are served and, in addition, they reduce long-term social costs for those students who are not successful in school.

What Are Some New Options for Dropouts?

After-School Programs

The Orange County Department of Education also provides after-school programs to support community school and day center programs. There are about 440,000 students in government-funded after-school programs in California, but there are another 1.2 million youngsters from low-income families ages 5 to 14 who would benefit from these programs because they cover many areas of student interest and need (OCDE - After-School Enrichment, 2001). The question is, why would students with a history of truancy and on the verge of dropping out of school attend after-school programs? These students are behind in school and credits; they are low in reading, language, and math skills; and they have family problems. Yet they also have talents, they want to learn and to succeed, and they are resilient. Common elements of high-quality after-school programs include:

- quality after-school staffing;
- strong management;
- student goal setting and sustainability;
- attention to safety, health, and nutrition issues;
- effective partnerships with community-based organizations, juvenile justice agencies, law enforcement, and youth groups;



World Class Education, Where Every Student Succeeds: Next Step - Effective Dropout Recovery (cont'd)

- strong involvement of families;
- enriching learning opportunities;
- linkages between school day and after-school personnel; and
- evaluation of program progress and effectiveness.

After-school activities cover many areas of student interest and need, as students have the opportunity to do homework; sharpen reading, language and computer skills; or participate in music, arts, and sports activities (OCDE - After-School Enrichment, 2001). The bottom line is that students attend after-school programs because they work. They help students who have been unsuccessful in school become successful.

After-school programs provide enrichment in activities that apply to social skills as well as academics. Supervised afternoon hours ensure a safe and healthy after-school

“The bottom line is that students attend after-school programs because they work.”

environment and benefit the student, the family, and the community. After-school programs lead to increased school attendance, decreased dropout rates, and improved achievement in math, reading, and other subjects. Students in after-school programs exhibit fewer behavioral problems, better ability to handle conflicts, and improved self-confidence (U.S. Dept. of Education and U.S. Dept. of Justice, 1998). High school students in after-school programs are much more positive about school, about their own schoolwork, and about their ambitions for college than are other high school students.

The Extra Mile

Orange County wants to help every student succeed. We know we want to lower our dropout rate. We know who needs our help, and we know what works for most, but we still lose students, even though we provide very successful programs as discussed previously. So what more can we do to assist and recover dropouts, even dropouts from alternative education programs, to ensure the success of every child?

Outreach Program

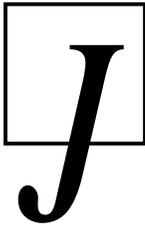
The Orange County Department of Education Alternative

Education Division has created an outreach program that has been very effective in helping some of our most at-risk students. The Alternative Education Division initially identified 290 students who had severed attendance as a focus for dropout recovery through the Outreach Program. Characteristics of this program that have made it successful include:

- providing students another opportunity through a customized educational program;
- giving students personal responsibility for their own education independent of a regular day program, where the teacher’s role becomes that of guide and support person;
- working with a myriad diverse resources in the local community;
- striving to involve parents and to establish rapport;
- developing individualized, flexible educational plans for progress toward graduation;
- partnering with the Regional Occupational Program to provide work experience options and a chance to learn an employable skill; and
- partnering with a local community college to stimulate students’ interests and goals.

A key component of the Outreach Program is the highly mobile teacher, who may travel 1,000 miles a month finding dropouts and bringing customized educational packages to them. The outreach teacher is a caring and dedicated professional teacher who visits each student on a weekly basis (or more often when needed) in non-traditional settings – community centers, libraries, at home (where they may be caring for children or sick parents), or motels serving as residences, etc. – often working early mornings, late evenings, and weekends. Students also receive follow-up phone calls by their positive-thinking teachers. Most students are motivated by the extraordinary level of caring exhibited by these teachers and work hard to stay in the program in spite of whatever adverse living conditions they must confront.

As a result of the Outreach Program, the dropout rate between 1998-99 and 1999-2000 in the Alternative Education Division decreased by 14%. Graduation rates in the overall alternative education program also increased by 17% during this same time period. In Orange County, the current Outreach Program population is comprised of: 78% teen parents, 74.5% public assistance recipients, 42% employed, and 9% motel residents. Last year the Outreach Program enabled 14.5% to graduate and 9% to return to school in their district of residency. The others remain in the program and are attending school.



World Class Education, Where Every Student Succeeds: Next Step - Effective Dropout Recovery (cont'd)

Summary

County office of education programs that serve alternative education populations are uniquely designed to offer effective options for all students. Traditional county programs have provided excellent alternatives for most at-risk students, but it is necessary to “go the extra mile” to recapture the most difficult to reach and teach, to give all children an opportunity to learn, to ensure that no child is left behind. The Orange County Superintendent’s vision is a world-class educational system where every student succeeds. The successful Outreach Program is part of that vision, helping to bolster efforts in this arena and supporting dropout recovery efforts. Not only is it one of the right things to do for students, it is most beneficial to society as a whole in terms of long-term dollar savings, in additional social costs avoided, and in guaranteeing an appropriate and meaningful school experience for all children.

About the authors:

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Dr. Price has served as President of LeARN, Consultant for the U.S. Department of Justice, and Superintendent of Schools for the Department of Correctional Education in Richmond, Virginia. He has also worked with the Los Angeles County Office of Education as Director of Juvenile Court and Community Schools and is Past-President for the International Correctional Education Association where he was instrumental in creating the strategic plan for this association.

Dr. Price has been in the field of alternative and correctional education for over 30 years, during which time he has conducted numerous seminars throughout the United States. He is a published author, teacher, and leader in his field.

Janice Histon has an education career spanning twenty-seven years. She has spent the past twelve years working with high-risk students as a teacher, site liaison, and administrator. Her efforts have resulted in partnerships with numerous public and private agencies serving students in community schools.

Janice Histon provides expertise in both general education and alternative education student needs.

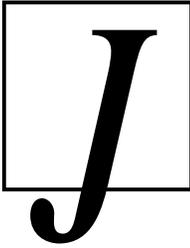
Karen Bellerose is an English, reading, and social studies teacher with the Alternative Education Division of the Orange County Department of Education. She has a B.A. from California State University, Fullerton, plus 75 plus post B.A. units and hundreds of hours in additional coursework in reading, classroom management, and new teacher training.

Karen’s excellent teaching has been nationally and locally recognized in that she was a Correctional Education Association “Teacher of the Year” finalist for the Western Region in 2000, ACCESS/OCDE “Teacher of the Year” in 2001-2002, and is an Orange County “Teacher of the Year” 2002 semi-finalist.

Lynne Robertson, a graduate of California State University at Long Beach, is a Senior Department Secretary in the Alternative Education Division of the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE).

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*Current Issues
in Alternative Education*

**Cyber-Lock Down:
Problems inherent
with the use of
internet technology
in correctional
education settings**

By Tom McIntyre, Ph.D.,
Virginia M. Tong, Ph.D. and
Joseph F. Perez, M.Ed.

Abstract

The availability of internet-based learning offers great promise for educating incarcerated youth. However, security concerns can prevent or limit its use. This article describes the various concerns and offers suggestions for overcoming these barriers.

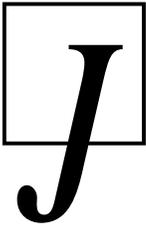
The Visit

When it comes to technology in correctional settings, it seems that the North American public tends to focus primarily on one issue: inmates having more cable TV channels than they do. Other than that concern, most citizens would probably view the use of informational technology in incarceration settings to be a “good thing,” providing inmates with educational opportunities and preparing them for future employment. Yet while high technology seems to be the wave of the future in our educational systems, it appears to be a wave that many in correctional education won’t be able to surf.

The authors (as part of their involvement with a federally funded project to train special education teachers to work with incarcerated youth) recently visited a particular correctional education setting in order to observe some of our practicum students. While there, we were given a tour of this shiny new facility that had opened only a year earlier. The educational area contained classrooms that were welcoming in design, well outfitted and supplied, and vividly decorated. We were especially impressed with the “computer lab” with its state-of-the-art machines lined up in long rows, and shelves stacked full of educational software CD’s. Nearby, we noticed a brightly colored sign (made by students using the computerized equipment in the graphics arts classroom) announcing the entrance to the “Distance Learning Room.”

Our guide unlocked the door, turned on the lights, and allowed us to meander through the remarkable array of projectors, monitors, cameras, and other high-tech gadgets and gizmos. We marveled at these devices and envied their abilities that were far beyond what was readily available to us back at the College. Further down the hallway, as we reflected on our tour, one of us (Joe), a full-time correctional educator (and part-time adjunct professor), whispered: “I’ll bet the distance learning lab is never used.” He then asked the tour guide about the status of the technology labs. We (Tom and Virginia) were flabbergasted to learn that the distance learning lab was non-functional!

We posed several more questions to determine exactly why such valuable interactive learning tools were under-utilized or merely gathering dust. Why, we asked, was distance learning still so distant from their incarcerated population? Why were the classroom doors always kept locked, placing the equipment in the machine-world equivalent of solitary confinement? We (Tom and Virginia) could envision only the multitude of positive outcomes that could be derived from the use of such advanced educational technology. In our ivory tower naivete, we imagined imprisoned youth being able to take advanced coursework by “sitting in” on classes held in one of the local school systems, earning credits toward graduation. Indeed, that was the intent when funding was first sought by the facility to set up the high-tech unit, but then an in-house discussion ensued, and harsh reality set in.



Cyber-Lock Down: Problems inherent with the use of internet technology in correctional education settings (cont'd)

**PCs (personal computers)
in PC (protective custody)**

Initially, we were told, staff conversations around the lunch table involved a great deal of jovial bantering about the soon-to-be-connected distance learning facility. Would “attending” the televised classes of the local school district be considered “a jailbreak”? Would students on the other end of the way audio-visual connection need to obtain visitors’ passes? Would the blinding orange jump suits worn by the incarcerated kids burn out TV monitors (or retinas) at the other end?

Shortly thereafter came more serious questions, emerging concerns, and eventually, disillusionment and equipment lockdown. Joe and our tour guide pointed out the problems that could be encountered in its use...many hypothetical...many already encountered at other facilities. They included:

- Gang members at different ends of the hook-up socializing or planning outside criminal activity across cyberspace.
- Rival gang members in the interactive class flashing their threatening hand signs at each other.
- Partners-in-crime at the opposite ends of the electronic line sending and receiving messages regarding the court case, its evidence, or intimidation of prosecution witnesses.
- The incarcerated partner-in-crime intimidating his/her co-defendant, out on bail, and believed to be “squealing” to the authorities to reduce or avoid penalties.
- A victim of a crime (or a witness to it) enrolled in the same class as the perpetrator.

“ We could only imagine the wonderful opportunities available to pupils allowed to crawl across the worldwide web...”

Other violations of contact prohibitions could also be imagined, so today, despite a state law requiring the provision of coursework that would allow incarcerated youth to obtain a standard high school diploma, the teachers at this facility (and many others) prepare bright, academically talented youngsters for the GED test. Their present educational setting simply cannot provide the necessary high school coursework. In

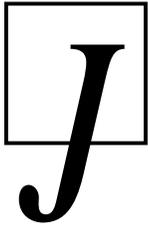
contrast to initial plans, distance learning is not used to enroll incarcerated youngsters in the classes of local schools, ACT or SAT preparation sessions, or for some, college level courses. The imaginings of expanded vocational opportunities dissipated. Great expectations have been denied.

Our questioning also brought out the fact that there is no internet hook-up in the computer lab. What, we wondered, were the insurmountable obstacles that kept students from discovering a new meaning for the often heard phrase “get on line”? We could only imagine the wonderful opportunities available to pupils allowed to crawl across the worldwide web: locating resources for papers/projects; keeping up with advancements out in “the world”; entering a “chat room” to discuss topics of interest; applying for college entry; and so forth.

No internet at the commissary

While no state laws or guidelines prevent internet access to students in New York’s correctional settings, we were told that those in charge of the correctional setting considered the possible actions of a few ne’er-do-well inmates who might use the internet for illicit or questionable purposes. They envisioned inmates contacting hate groups, ordering contraband, downloading formulas for making bombs from kitchen chemicals, or printing multiple copies of pornographic photos. Although never investigated or verified, decision makers believed that at least one web site must exist that tells how to pick locks or break out of jails. For unreformed con-artists, cyber-scams such as mail order or credit card fraud weren’t out of the question either (Even without direct access, USA Today recently reported on how great numbers of female inmates sent personal ads to internet companies such as “Women behind bars.” While many marriages reportedly resulted, several love-struck citizens sent money to inmates for their legal defenses, never to hear from their girlfriends again).

Call us (Tom and Virginia) naïve again, but we also figured that correctional facilities could at least allow the use of electronic mail for communication. Certainly, increased access to the outside world (family) would do much to alleviate stress and produce a less agitated, better focused student inmate. Those of us who use e-mail know of the thrift and convenience of this method for keeping in touch with family, friends, and colleagues. Wouldn’t this mode of communication also provide inmates with a way to “visit” their distant families who don’t have the financial resources to accept lengthy collect calls from their incarcerated loved ones? Granted, these same families might not own a computer or be



able to afford the monthly internet access fee, but we imagined them being able to collect and send messages at a local school or social service agency. The response when we asked the facility's teachers whether they had e-mail: "Heck, we don't even have d-mail yet." Another optimistic vision shattered.

Those in charge of security decided that teachers would be unable to consistently and correctly "censor" the outgoing messages or recognize code words disguising criminal conduct in seemingly innocuous incoming communication. Would the educators even be legally permitted to read and censor personal notes? Would teachers want to take on the added responsibility of monitoring internet communication? Internal security was also an issue. Failing to properly monitor conversations could result in the transmission of unsavory messages to others, friends or otherwise, between segregated parts of the facility. Given these concerns, a great motivator and learning tool for

"It seems that instead of asking how technology is being used in correctional settings, the better question is how (and why) it's not being used there."

improving typing skills, writing mechanics, compositional competence, and computer literacy was withheld from many correctional educators and their students. Penal PC pen pals prohibited.

Suggestions for consideration

Despite the validity of the concerns and restrictions mentioned above, correctional educators can't help but look to the potential of the internet to alleviate many of the encumbrances now facing incarcerated education programs: the lack of space and materials, a small number of course offerings, the lack of outside credit for continuing education, and the difficulties in providing high school diploma programming, to name a few. While the difficulties inherent in incorporating internet use into the correctional classroom are apparent, there are some options that might allow for its regulated use in some settings. We offer them for your consideration, understanding that they may be cumbersome or

non-viable in some correctional classrooms.

Internet Use

- Make use of the imperfect, but useful software "filters" such as "Net Nanny," "Cybersitter," or others that prevent access to unsavory sites.
- Assure clear expectations for appropriate use of the internet are communicated to students previous to providing them with access.
- Ensure close, continuing staff supervision of internet use by students.
- Make each student's future internet use contingent upon his/her appropriate use in previous sessions.
- Use e-mail as a reward for effort and appropriate behavior in class. That e-mailing might be conducted under one of the following three conditions:
 - a. Students must agree to screening of their messages by supervisory personnel who are the only ones allowed to click in the "send" button. Violations of this procedure would result in removal of e-mailing privileges.
 - b. Designate a staff member to be in charge of sending student-dictated messages and receiving incoming e-mail.
 - c. Allow uncensored electronic mailings to approved mailboxes only. This approach is similar to that implemented with the use of phones during "slot time" in which those individuals at the receiving end of the phone lines decided if they wish to speak with inmates.

Distance Learning

- Inform the inmates of rules and restrictions previous to academic sessions.
- Ensure classmates in the public high school are informed that a student from your facility will be part of their course. Those with concerns could withdraw from the course or voice their objections for consideration by educational administrators.
- Screen public high school classmates to assure that none are connected to the legal cases of inmates or belong to gangs.
- If an inmate does not wish to be identified, or non-academic communication between the inmate and others is a concern, turn off camera at the correctional setting so that the inmate is unable to be seen by those

Career Reflections



A Personal Perspective: Working as Visiting Educator for the California Department of Education

By Kathi McCulla

I wonder just what type of mid-life crisis I was going through the fall of 1999, when I decided to leave the familiar and rewarding experiences of teaching at a continuation high school for the completely unknown vistas of working at the California Department of Education (CDE). I told myself that it was only a career adventure and if I didn't like it I could terminate the contract within 30 days and resume my teaching position in my district. I had a "safety net" and my district was holding my position with a temporary hire. With a heightened sense of purpose, I headed for my "cube" on the second floor of the CDE building at 7th and Capitol Mall to idealistically "make a difference" in education. In my heart, I was on a mission to set those guys down at the state straight on what's *really* going on in the trenches, and just how they can best serve educators, students, and schools.

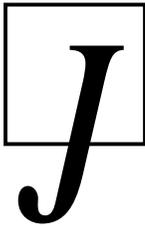
The learning curve for the first four months was very steep and I found myself in a perpetual state of wonder, confusion, and incredulity. Although I was a political science major with an emphasis in law and had a strong academic background into political processes, I was taken aback by the realities of government employment and politics in general. My education, idealism, and ego were getting in the way of reality. I had to learn quickly how to maneuver through the system to experience some sense of effectiveness and value to my work.

I finally got involved with some unique and worthwhile experiences that were specific to my assignment. I was involved in the accreditation and program quality review processes, as well as helping to develop some of the policies and procedures for state mandated testing and accountability. Everything was

evolving very quickly legislatively without the necessary resources to fund the administration for these new politically popular reforms. CDE was in a constant state of "reorganization," shifting, or more aptly adding to staff workloads to address the requirements of these mandates. It was difficult to keep up with the political changes, let alone keep educators informed about what they needed to be addressing in their school planning processes. I think during that 2000-2001 school year, most of the education programs consultants were "winging it" most of the time, especially around the PSAA (Public School Accountability Act) High School Exit Exam requirements.

Despite the times, political working environment, and cube-office life of state work, I enjoyed many worthwhile experiences. Some of those opportunities included:

- participating in policy making;
- developing curricular and teacher training materials;
- developing procedures for implementing legislative mandates;
- learning opportunities and professional growth;
- contributing to the *Aiming High* document;
- collaborating with intra-department divisions such as curriculum, accountability, testing, special education, high school initiatives, education options, alternative education, etc.;
- collaborating with other state governmental departments and agencies such as the Governor's office, Secretary of Education's office, the State Legislature, Health Services, the Department of Finance, just to name a



Career
Reflections

A Personal Perspective: Working as Visiting Educator for the Department of Education (cont'd)

few;

- collaborating with statewide educators, professionals, and political representatives on committees and advisory groups;
- meeting quality, dedicated educators and government workers who are as passionate about educational reform and alternative education as I am;
- making a difference in some tiny way; and
- advocating for the needs of at-risk students and alternative educators on a daily basis.

One of the greatest opportunities I experienced during my tenure with the state was travel. I was working as the liaison from the department to the WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges) office on the joint accreditation process, Focus on Learning. In this capacity, I got to travel all over the state, meeting educators from all types of educational venues and co-facilitating some of the many WASC workshops. At the time, the state was working with a 13 billion-dollar surplus and travel policies for consultants were liberal. I understand that under the current financial crunch of a 10 billion plus budget deficit, travel has been significantly reduced to only that deemed “essential.”

By far the “most excellent adventure” I experienced was unique to my position as the WASC Focus on Learning Liaison. I had been a WASC visiting team chair for over 20 years and as such, was invited to chair visiting committees going to two international schools in Japan. One was in Kyoto and the other Fukuoka. I was able to bank my vacation (off) days and stretch this Asia trip to almost five weeks. This was a lifetime experience for a career teacher. To be able to take the entire month of April off to visit and tour countries in Asia was extraordinary.

Perhaps all vocations have their up side as well as some drawbacks, and that was certainly true of working for the state. The old adage that you never want to learn about how legislation and sausage are made is so true. I approached this job opportunity with an expectation of order, justice, professionalism, and integrity, and in a few instances I was deeply disappointed with what I experienced.

Protocol is the fancy word for *the way things have been done for a long time without question of process or its efficacy*. Some protocols are written; some are not. Some are couched under the broader heading of that which is expected from a *professional* which basically means *we always want to make our superiors (especially those in politically sensitive positions) look good no matter how ignorant or misinformed they are*.

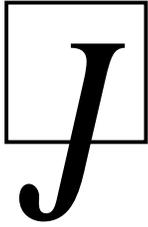
Undeniably, the greatest drawback for me was realizing

how many distinct stakeholder groups bring their irreconcilable needs and demands to the table to be addressed fully by the department: the legislature, the governor, the Secretary of Education, the Federal Education Department and its mandates, the state Board of Education, professional educator organizations, colleges and universities, parent groups, special interest groups, educators from all venues, charter coalitions, county offices of education, cities, publishers, and the media. It is a daunting task to bring these diverse and irreconcilable demands together toward a common purpose and result. I’m convinced that this task could never be adequately accomplished. You know, you can please some of the people, some of the time, but never all the people, all of the time.

So, if I haven’t fully put you off, you might want to consider pursuing your own career adventure by becoming a visiting educator. Here’s how it works. The process begins by becoming aware of job vacancies. You can do this by tapping into the CDE website periodically and checking for job openings. Occasionally, positions are advertised in *ED CAL*, but not many. Be sure to look for ones that say, “For recruitment purposes, will consider visiting educators.” Call the CDE’s referral numbers listed and get information about the actual job responsibilities, tasks, assignments, etc.

“...the greatest drawback for me was realizing how many distinct stakeholder groups bring their irreconcilable needs and demands to the table to be addressed fully by the department...”

Frequently, the job description is generic in nature and may or may not resemble the actual work to be done. After applying for a position, interviewing, and being selected you cannot start working until your visiting educator’s contract has been negotiated through the unbelievable layers of administration at the department level, as well as through your own district or county office. Your district may or may not approve “loaning” you to the state for up to two years. (This two-year time period may be extended if mutually agreeable by both the district and state.) Some districts have cut off all their employees from



A Personal Perspective: Working as Visiting Educator for the Department of Education (cont'd)

taking jobs as visiting educators with the CDE because the department was snatching all their “movers and shakers” and leaving the district with a very difficult job of filling these temporary vacancies. Benefits and monthly salary warrants are still paid by the district. The district recovers these expenses by billing the state directly.

I negotiated a 210-day contract for 1.5 years. By extending my working year from 183 days to 210, and by being compensated by my per diem, I yielded about \$20,000 gross more salary in the full calendar year I worked for the department. My master teacher salary plus the \$20,000 has now become the base for my retirement calculations, since STRS was an additional benefit of my visiting educator salary. By projecting the retirement calculations for highest year compensation, I discovered that I could now retire at 57 years old and make 89% of my base, and end up making \$6,000 more than I’m currently paid as a 30 plus year teacher. At that point I’ll make more money retiring than working.

Despite the drawbacks, just focusing on the financial gain, professional growth, and the personal stretch, the visiting educator experience was a good one for me. But more importantly, I’m proud to have been an alternative educator working as a consultant. The state needs educators from the alternative schools participating in the political process. It is so important for alternative educators to continue to advocate for the needs of all our unique programs and personnel by taking some time out away from the school site to get involved with CDE. We often wonder why policies and procedures that filter down through the system show little, if any, regard for the thousands of students we serve and rarely reflect the nature of our mission. These statewide mandates often seem to even jeopardize our basic existence, let alone the quality work we do with at-risk students. Reflect and consider the opportunities and challenges inherent in working as a visiting educator. Consider the important role of advocating for the needs of alternative education before the procedural realities of reform legislation take form. The state needs the wisdom of the alternative educator involved in policy, procedure, testing and curricular creation and reform.

About the Author

Kathi McCulla has taught alternative education for 28 years, including continuation, independent study, and adult education. She spent 1.5 years with the California Department of Education as an Education Programs Consultant. She has offered workshops throughout the country on multicultural and diversity education, as well as professional teacher training classes at various universities. She holds a Master’s Degree in Education, a Lifetime Teaching Credential, and a School Administrative Credential. For more information about CDE’s Visiting Educator experiences, feel free to contact Kathi McCulla, C/O Adelante H. S. 350 Atlantic Street, Roseville, CA, 95678, (916) 782-3155 ext. 6115, or email at kmcculla@rjuhsd.k12.ca.us.

Filling the Need for More Teachers: Make Second-Career Teaching a More Viable Option



by Andrew Schumacher

California needs new teachers. At the same time, calls are being made to fill all classrooms in the state with fully credentialed teachers. In order to meet the projected need for qualified, credentialed teachers in the next decade, we must find a way to make entering the profession and becoming a qualified, credentialed teacher easier. The current process, which requires a half year of unpaid student teaching, represents too great of an economic hurdle for many interested professionals working in other fields to become teachers in California public schools. Many very qualified, capable people representing a rich array of skills, talent, and experience want to become teachers, but are simply unable to do so as a practical matter because of the very limited and burdensome avenues to teaching currently available to them.

In December of 2001, the Associated Press ran a news article proclaiming that “California will face a growing shortage of qualified teachers in this decade as older instructors retire in record numbers and

schools hire more teachers without preliminary credentials,” citing a recently released study by the Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning, a nonprofit group funded by the California State University and several private foundations. The report indicated that last year, 14% of California’s 301,000 public school teachers did not have preliminary teaching credentials, and this number is projected to reach 21% by 2009. It asserted that California will need to make “significant improvements” in teacher pay and working conditions in order to eliminate the

pay and a perceived improvement in working conditions would help attract more people to the teaching profession, but a more urgent need should be addressed first: We must make it easier to become a qualified teacher. For a great many people, teaching is an attractive prospect right now, with current pay levels and working conditions. But, as a practical matter, teaching is inaccessible to most professionals in other fields because of the current teacher credentialing process.

I am a second-year alternative education teacher in San Joaquin County’s

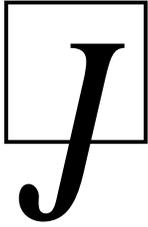
“U.S. Secretary of State George Schultz could not teach a government class in a California high school.”

shortage of what the group called “skilled teachers.”

The California Teachers Association has been running ads on news radio stations announcing that California will need 20,000 new teachers each year for the next decade in order to meet projected needs. Like the Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning, the CTA contends that greater teacher pay and more autonomy in the classroom will attract and help retain the teachers we need.

It is probably true that an increase in

one. Program. But, unlike many, if not most, public school teachers, I did not enter the teaching profession straight out of college. I first served as an officer in the United States Navy and practiced law for five years in California before deciding once and for all that I wanted to teach. Mine was a personal decision based on quality of life issues and a desire to do something that I believe is truly worthwhile. I was attracted to teaching not by the pay, but by the profession itself. But an enormous obstacle stood in my way: the



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California teacher credentialing process.

I recall listening to a speech given by Governor Pete Wilson seven years ago in which he lamented the fact that so many “great” and accomplished Californians could not teach in California public schools because they did not have the appropriate credentials. As an example, he noted that U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz could not teach a government class in a California high school. It is noteworthy that this is still true today. George Shultz, holder of a Ph.D. in industrial economics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, former dean of the University of Chicago School of Business, a former U.S. Secretary of Labor and Director of the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, and now a professor of international economics at the Stanford University Graduate School of Business and a distinguished fellow at the Hoover Institution, cannot teach a government or an economics class in a California public high school. Why? Because he still does not have a teaching credential.

But I digress. I was determined that I was going to become a teacher. I quit my legal practice in 1995, and enrolled in a teacher credential program at a satellite campus of Chapman University. I began working part time as a group supervisor at the Stanislaus County Juvenile Hall in order to gain experience working with kids. While still taking education classes at Chapman, I then accepted a position as a Stanislaus County juvenile probation officer. I was working with kids who were at a crossroads in their lives. I couldn't help all of them, but I helped many to turn their lives around, or at least change the negative direction in which they were heading. I felt that what I was doing was a worthwhile endeavor, and I was happy. But I still wanted to teach.

Finally, I completed all the coursework at Chapman to get my secondary teaching credential. All that was

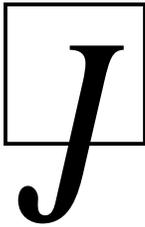
left was the student teaching. The only thing that was standing in my way was the practical requirements of life. In order to fulfill my student teaching requirement, I would have to quit my job. I would have no income for half a year. Not only that, I would have to pay Chapman about \$5,000.00 for the privilege. And then I would have to hope that I could immediately find a job in the area so that I would not have to sell my home and relocate. Not impossible, but certainly not guaranteed, either. As a practical matter, I could not do it. Because of the student teaching requirements, I could not get my teaching credential. Although I still wanted to teach, I could not do so. If I had pursued a teaching credential right after college, I could have done it. I had made it through three years of law school with little income. But once real life sets in, everything changes. Mortgages, debt, family, and the like make the prospect of working for half a year with no income, and no guarantee of a job afterward, quite an obstacle to teaching in California.

So I continued working as a juvenile probation officer for several years. But then I spoke with a longtime friend of my wife who was teaching alternative education in the San Joaquin County Office of Education's one. Program. I told her of my previous efforts to become a teacher, and of the desire that I still had to teach. From her, I found out about San Joaquin County's Project IMPACT, a teacher credential program that allows teachers to teach as pre-interns and interns while taking classes at night and receiving regular classroom observations and support from practicum supervisors. Shortly thereafter, I submitted my application, went through the interview process, and was hired. I had finally found a feasible way to become a teacher, and I considered myself fortunate to be able to continue working with an “at-risk” population at the same time. But I can

unequivocally state that I would not have been able to do so without the availability of pre-intern and intern certificates, and a teacher credential program that allows me to be fully employed while I earn my credential.

With the current state of the credentialing process in California, intern certificates and emergency permits are a necessity for many teachers to enter the profession. At a recent one. Program all-staff meeting, I distributed a survey to all of the teachers in our alternative education program. Fifty-two teachers responded to the survey. Of those respondents, 54% indicated that they had begun teaching in the one. Program with either an emergency permit or an intern certificate. Only 46% came to the one. Program with a full teaching credential, preliminary or otherwise. Significantly, of the 54% who began teaching in the program without a full credential, 82% *said that as a practical matter, they would not have been able to enter the teaching profession if emergency permits and/or intern certificates had not been available.*

For 86% of the teachers responding to the survey, teaching was not their first career. All of them were drawn to teaching for a variety of reasons, none of which included money. One teacher had previously served as the Chief Executive Officer of a central valley hospital system. He became interested in teaching when one of his two hospitals “adopted” a local high school. He got to know a young man at risk of failing. He said he came to realize that “unless people become meaningfully involved, many youths will continue down a failing chain.” The experience motivated him to become a teacher. Like me and many others, he came to the one. Program with a pre-intern certificate, and has since earned his teaching credential through Project IMPACT. And also like me and many others, he said that as a practical matter, he would not have been able to



Career Reflections

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enter the teaching profession if emergency permits and/or intern certificates had not been available.

Including myself, three attorneys currently teach in the one. Program. Other prior professional experience represented by those teachers responding to the survey includes an industrial engineer, two accountants, a finance manager, a mental health clinician, a sheriff's deputy, a police officer, an FBI agent, a congressional staffer, a budget analyst, five probation officers, an executive recruiter, two pastors, a museum director, seven small business owners, an insurance broker, two claims adjusters, a translator, an agricultural inspector, a land surveyor, two social workers, an electronics technician, a photographer, an independent film maker, an emergency medical technician, a recreational therapist, an orthopedic therapist, an employment and training director, a job preparation specialist, two human resources specialists, a real estate broker, and four counselors. Five teachers served in the military. Other teachers were directors, administrators, designers, and managers. Six teachers worked in sales.

What attracted these people to alternative education? Forty-six percent expressed a desire to work with "at risk" youth. Another 25% wanted to experience the relative autonomy and teaching creativity found in a nontraditional setting. Eleven percent came to the program because program administrators actively recruited them, and nine percent of the respondents said they came to the program because they simply "needed a job." Other reasons expressed included "flexibility," "working with the same kids all day in multiple subjects," "smaller class size," and "I just wanted to make a difference."

I believe that our program is enriched, and our students benefit from, such diversity in life experience and professional expertise. Again, 54% of these second career teachers did not have

a full credential when they came to the program. And 82% of those would not have been able to enter the teaching profession had emergency permits or intern certificates not been available. Yet the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing is now moving to amend Division VIII of Title 5, Sections 80026.4, 80026.6, and 80122, of the California Code of Regulations, pertaining to the Plan to Develop Fully Qualified Educators. The proposed amendments would phase out the option of applying for and using the Plan to Develop Fully Qualified Educators to renew emergency permits and waivers. Agencies with approved plans no longer will be able to use the plan to renew emergency permits and credential waivers after January 1, 2004. In other words, emergency permits will be phased out and will no longer be available.

from becoming teachers.

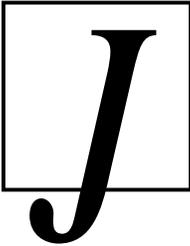
Perhaps it would be too simplistic to suggest that the first year of teaching, typically a probationary period anyway, be treated as the "student teaching" period currently required in traditional teacher credential programs. These first year teachers would teach, as they currently do when student teaching, and would be supervised, observed, and supported, as they currently are supposed to be when student teaching. But they would be paid for their work. This would eliminate the severe economic hurdle that most people desiring a second career in teaching currently face.

If this is not possible, then California needs more teacher credential programs like San Joaquin County's Project IMPACT. It is a long, arduous process spanning two and a half years, but for me

“Many well-qualified people already *are* attracted to the teaching profession. Yet they are prevented as a practical matter from becoming teachers due to the current teacher credentialing system.”

There seems to be little dispute that California has a great need to recruit a large number of teachers over the next decade. Yet in an effort to improve the quality of education in California, the CTC is proposing to eliminate a viable way for many professionals in other fields to enter the teaching profession. I do not mean to suggest that effective and meaningful teacher training is not important. But the current requirement in most teacher credential programs to complete half a year of unpaid student teaching is a major stumbling block preventing many people with a great deal of life experience and professional expertise to offer our children

and many others like me, it is well worth it. Information disseminated in the teaching classes has far greater value because it can be directly related to one's ongoing, active teaching. Experienced practicum supervisors provide constant support. And unlike traditional teacher credential programs, when students in Project IMPACT graduate and receive their teaching credentials, they are not just ready to teach, they already *are* teachers. But what makes the two-and-a-half year IMPACT program most valuable is that for me and many of my colleagues, it represents the only economically feasible way for us to become California public



Innovative Program

Each One Reach One

San Mateo County Office of Education

Population Served:

High school age youth attending court, community or alternative schools, or incarceration facilities.

Program Description:

Each One Reach One (EORO) is a theater arts program that was originally piloted with students in the San Mateo County Office of Education’s Community Schools Program in Redwood City, California. Due to San Mateo County Office of Education’s Court and Community Schools’ continued dedication and commitment towards finding innovative and alternative approaches to motivate young people in their education, EORO currently extends programs to students in most of San Mateo County Office’s Court and Community Schools. These programs continue to be very successful and have allowed EORO’s program to reach youth in other county agencies, including the Youth Guidance Center, San Francisco; Marin Juvenile Hall; Pilacritos Alternative High School, Half Moon Bay; and Thornton High School, Daly City.

EORO provides a forum for at-risk youth to be heard and to experience success through the writing of plays under the individual mentorship of professional artists. EORO conducts intensive playwriting programs which employ theater professionals to work, one-on-one, with at-risk youth attending court, community or alternative schools.

These young writers work with selected/assigned mentors for 35 hours over a two-week span. During this time, they learn to release their creativity, practice both verbal and written expression, and ultimately write a one-act play. The playwriting workshops end with a staged reading of the young writers’ plays. Professional actors volunteer to bring these plays to life before the young writers’ community of fellow students or detainees, officials of the facility, family members, and sometimes the general public.

While this is often the most frightening part of the program for the young writers, it is also the most rewarding. These events provide youth the opportunity to succeed in a challenging endeavor and to have their accomplishments publicly recognized by their family, peers and, most importantly, themselves. The affirmation of their success builds self-confidence in their own abilities and encourages them to continue developing their new skills.

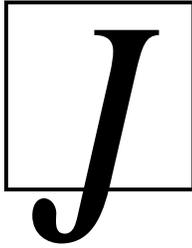
EORO provides young people with the opportunities and tools to express themselves creatively, in ways that do not bring harm to themselves or others.

EORO’s goals for its young writers are to:

- increase self-esteem and confidence;
- increase comfort level in sharing ideas and feelings;
- enhance ability to trust an adult;
- provide an opportunity to recognize success;
- develop group participation and communication skills;
- increase appreciation for differing viewpoints and diversity;
- inspire desire to read and write; and
- build ability to focus and follow through on projects.

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*Innovative
Program*

**National Juvenile Detention Association
Center for Research & Professional Development
*Orange County Department of Education,
Division of Alternative Education***

Population Served:

Youth in residential settings.

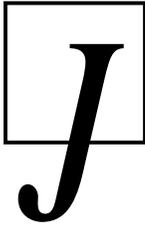
Program Description:

Cooperation and collaboration are terms to which correctional educators give much “lip service.” They are often the ideal to which we strive rather than the reality of our day-to-day work experience. The National Juvenile Detention Association (NJDA) is in the business of doing good things for youth and staff in juvenile confinement and custody facilities. Thus, when Dr. Ted Price, the Orange County California Department of Education’s Assistant Superintendent, Division of Alternative Education, was apprised of NJDA’s selection of his program to implement an Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) grant, he was not only honored, but also cognizant of the tremendous opportunity to put vision into practice.

Most teachers enter juvenile confinement facilities without adequate preparation for the unique challenge of providing meaningful education to delinquent and dependent children in secure settings. To address this concern, Dave Roush, Director of the NJDA Center for Research and Professional Development, and the NJDA Board of Directors created the National Council for Educators of At-Risk and Delinquent Youth. Through the efforts of Roush and Carol Cramer Brooks, NJDA Director of Training, additional funding was secured from OJJDP to develop and implement a 40 hour core training. Though originally designed as a pre-service training of teachers new to juvenile confinement education programs, the Orange County approach was to intermingle both novice and experienced teaching professionals in the program. Brooks and Carter White, a noted professional in the field who is currently an administrator with Youth Services International, were selected to provide the training.

As an introduction to the program, all institutional teaching personnel were provided an initial 8 hours of training in the spring of 2000. Twenty-seven teachers were selected to participate in the complete 40-hour training curriculum. The success of this staff development approach prompted the National Council to suggest an expansion of the program, using the “trainer of trainers” model. The focus was to build upon the primary mission by attempting to strengthen the relationships of the two agencies through an internal, line staff training of both custodial and educational personnel assigned to institutional settings, many of whom were “veterans” of the two systems. With the support and commitment of Orange County’s Chief Probation Officer, Stephanie Lewis, the concept evolved, and ultimately 20 education staff and 5 probation staff representing the varied county institutions were selected for a comprehensive 3-day training.

The 40 hour *National Training Curriculum for Educators of Youth in Confinement* includes modules in institutional culture, interpersonal relationships, safety and security, trends and issues in juvenile justice and education, student assessment, curriculum content standards, teaching and learning, behavior management, crisis intervention, social skills and transition, plus a newly added section addressing learners with disabilities. The 3-day training for teachers and probation staff emphasized the adult learning and trainer skills necessary to effectively lead colleagues in



***Innovative
Program***

National Juvenile Detention Association Center for Research & Professional Development (cont'd)

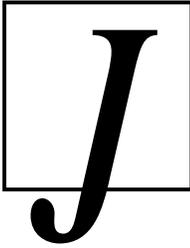
addressing such topics as facilitating group discussions, activities, and group development; preparing for training; delivery options; icebreakers and energizers; learning styles and adult learning theory; classroom management; giving directions; and designing training aids.

The intent of the training in which both institutional and school staff participated was to maximize interaction and understanding between both entities. While the foci of each agency may be different, the interests and needs of the children with whom they work are the same. Teachers have to interact with a number of other professionals – counselors, direct care staff, court workers, probation officers, and medical personnel. They often have to integrate aspects of the youths’ treatment plans and institutional discipline system into their classroom construct. Institutional staff members assume the parental responsibilities of caring for and supporting residents while ensuring physical needs are attended to, and promoting the educational as well as the institutional program mandates. Safety and security are primary concerns of all; something which is not a natural priority of the teaching staff. How better to address mutual concerns and misunderstandings than to learn together in an atmosphere of team building and sharing experiences that promote mutually acknowledged goals. The uncommon expertise and enthusiasm of both Carol Brooks and Carter White is noteworthy. Not only did they deliver the program content in an interactive and engaging format, but also their approach was designed to ensure the concept knowledge and understanding of participants.

When teachers and institutional personnel grow together in a learning situation, unique things begin to occur. Successful student development is facilitated through the collaboration of diverse professionals. Their delivery of consistent messages to youth facilitates student success as they transition into and out of the confinement facility. Through the efforts of NJDA, this educational training curriculum, now available on the national level, has evolved into a useful commodity not only to new teachers in confinement facilities, but to veteran educators and to other institutional staff as well. Both the institutional family and the community are benefited and the program for the delinquents is stronger as a result.

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*Innovative
Program*

Statewide Foster Youth Services Program
Kern County Office of Education

Population Served:

Youth in residential settings.

Program Description:

Foster children are those who have been removed from their homes primarily due to abuse, neglect or abandonment. Foster youth have often been shuffled from placement to placement and school to school. The Foster Youth Services (FYS) program aims to ensure that all educational, medical, psychological and transitional services are addressed appropriately and in a timely manner. FYS also strives to improve the lives of children in the foster care system by working within existing resources.

The primary goal of FYS is to improve academic success and behavior of foster children. As foster children are highly mobile, their school records are often misplaced or lost, causing them to be repeatedly re-immunized and re-tested. FYS provides services that can recover transcripts and assessments, and verify current immunization records. This service helps to expedite the admittance and placement of foster youth into school programs.

FYS History

In an effort to support children placed in foster care, the California Department of Education implemented education-based programs that would assist foster children with their educational and emotional needs. Additionally, the programs were aimed to reduce multiple changes in foster care placement. In 1973, Elk Grove Unified, San Juan Unified, Sacramento City Unified, and Mt. Diablo Unified school districts initiated FYS to improve foster children's success in school as required by Education Code sections 42920-42925. In 1992, new programs were added in Placer, Nevada and Paramount School Districts.

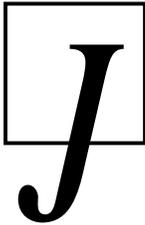
The six core FYS programs were found to be very successful in reaching their goals regarding academic achievement. Their success resulted in continuing support from legislation and additional funding, which allowed for expansion of the program through the 1998 Budget Act. A new County-Wide Foster Youth Services Program was created to make FYS services available to all children, ages 4 to 21, in licensed children's care facilities (group homes) throughout California. The County-Wide Foster Youth Services Program strives to reflect the core mandates of Education Code sections 42920-42925 and primary concepts of Senate Bill 933 (Chapter 311, Statutes of 1998, Thompson).

Kern County FYS Program

The Kern County FYS program is facilitated through the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office. The grant was awarded to KCSOS in August of 2000. The primary objectives for Kern County FYS are divided in to three sections:

Educational:

- to reduce the number of school delinquency, suspensions, and expulsions;
- to increase school attendance and grade level equivalent gains between admissions and discharge in the basic academic skill areas as measured by standardized test scores;
- to assist with the transfer of current transcripts, immunization records and Individualized Education Plans; and



***Innovative
Program***

Statewide Foster Youth Services Program (cont'd)

- to assist with grades, test scores and determine academic growth and tutoring needs.

Medical/Psychological:

- to track routine visits to the doctor, optometrist, and dentist, in order to ensure youth are receiving proper medical care; and
- to track psychological services and ensure youth are receiving counseling services.

Transitional Services:

- to track transitional services, including vocational training, independent living skills, and emancipation assistance.

Additional Services:

Kern County FYS has recently added an internship component to the program. FYS works closely with local colleges to provide direct services at the group home sites. FYS interns provide one-on-one and group counseling, tutoring and mentoring activities. Since the initiation of the internship program, we have built solid relationships with many local group homes. We have been able to establish needs of the children and provide services that correlate with success at both home and school.

The Future of FYS:

FYS has proven to be a successful program that continues to be funded on an annual basis. As mentioned earlier in this article, the FYS grant is non competitive and is offered by the California Department of Education. The grant is open to all California counties and only school districts or county offices of education are eligible to apply. FYS only serves children in licensed children's care facilities (group homes) throughout California. Funding is based on the number of children that reside in group homes in the prospective county.

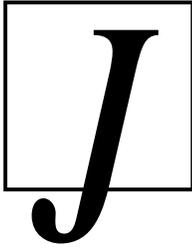
FYS Application Procedure

To receive a request for application, contact:

Educational Options Office
California Department of Education
660 J Street, Suite 400
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone # (916) 445-6217
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*Innovative
Program*

An English Department at Juvenile Hall
Santa Clara County Office of Education

Population Served:

Juvenile hall inmates - mostly teenagers.

Program Description:

Osborne School (Santa Clara County Juvenile Hall) offers a period of English and a period of language arts each day to each unit of students. Although there is some overlap, the two subjects attempt different goals that go hand in hand. English generally encompasses literary thematic units designed by Steve Johnson at Santa Clara University (SCU) as part of a Character-based Literacy (CBL) program. The curriculum focuses on reading and the elements of literature, such as symbolism, characterization, setting, and theme. The themes are chosen to promote pro-social behavior and discourage anti-social behavior.

Language Arts focuses on writing skills and provides the foundation for understanding and appreciating what is covered in English. The English curriculum is more standardized than the language arts curriculum because we are attempting to provide consistency in English among all the schools in the Alternative Schools Department (ASD). All the community and court schools in the Santa Clara County system are doing the same thematic units with the same readings at any given time. This way a student may go from a court school to a community school (or vice versa) and have consistency in his or her English curriculum.

The introduction of the CBL program has presented challenges for teachers in ASD who deal with a high percentage of low-functioning students, extreme behavior problems, and, in the case of Osborne School, a transient population. One challenge is trying to make the required curriculum relevant to the student population. Because the students are generally not academically oriented, the staff tries to satisfy the state requirements while presenting lessons and activities our students will be likely to respond to and use in later life. An example of this is the addition of job skills lessons, such as resume and cover-letter writing, to the files. These lessons address specific writing standards while helping students develop skills they will need in the coming years.

The early meetings of the English Department members resulted in a collection of lesson plans, literary guides, graphic organizer templates, short literary works, author information, and other useful materials for teachers to use when designing lessons for their English and language arts classes. In compiling and organizing the great wealth of materials that have become the department files, staff are always attempting to provide modified lesson plans and activities to meet the needs of the special education students, as well as the more advanced. Having regular department meetings, gathering input from all teachers, and frequently discussing what works and what doesn't work with our varied population has been essential in ensuring that we have tried and true methods for addressing all our students' needs.

In addition to developing lesson plans, the Osborne School English Department publishes a student poetry anthology called *Osborne Poets*, and a handbook for all English and language arts teachers to use as a guide to our department's files.

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The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools

***Innovative
Program***

An English Department at Juvenile Hall (cont'd)

The English department resources are still changing as teachers continue to experiment with ways to engage students in the new curriculum. The one constant, however, is that the department now has a nucleus of ideas and materials that everyone can draw from. Staff are reducing the amount of duplicated effort and, hopefully, creating more consistency for students in the process.

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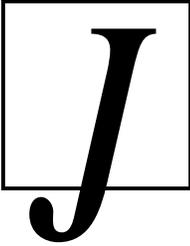
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*Innovative
Program*

**Los Pinos High School:
Interagency Collaboration Leads to Successful
College Program for Incarcerated Minors**
Orange County Department of Education

Population Served:

16-18 year-old incarcerated males.

Program Description:

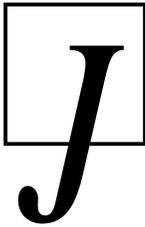
Los Pinos High School services the educational needs of a 125-bed, all male conservation camp for incarcerated minors. Situated at 3100 feet elevation in the Cleveland National Forest, the camp is operated by the Orange County Probation Department.

Young men ages 16 to 18 are considered for this vocational training program designed for juvenile court commitments of three months to one year. Vocational training provided by the probation department includes ROP classes in office technology, building maintenance, and fire science. Vocational work crews learn landscaping, auto repair, painting, masonry, construction or culinary arts. In conjunction with the Forest Service, Los Pinos work crews refurbish nearby campsites and construct hiking trails.

The school program is designed to complement the vocational nature of the institution, as well as to provide services necessary to transition students into mainstream society. It provides a comprehensive high school curriculum, and students are strongly encouraged to obtain their GEDs in addition to earning their diploma. During school year 2000-01, 148 Los Pinos students received their GEDs.

During the last three years, the school staff has embraced collaborative efforts with outside agencies in order to expand the educational opportunities for the students. Previously, the school's responsibility for the students was during school hours and ended when students were returned to probation custody. Contact between school and custodial staff consisted of exchanging students at the beginning and end of the day. The school began to pursue programs that included probation staff, such as the Bridges program, which diagnoses undeveloped cognitive, perceptual, and sensory skills; the car design competition, where Los Pinos students competed successfully with local comprehensive high schools; and the development of a homeroom class, organized by residential unit with probation counselors present. The result of these programs has been better relations between school and custodial staff as well as a willingness on the part of both agencies to make positive programs succeed.

One of the biggest successes observed at Los Pinos was the college program involving the cooperation and coordination of several different agencies: the school, the custodial staff (probation department) and the college. The school had to first establish criteria for candidates. Students who had acquired enough credits to graduate were eligible, as well as those who had passed their GED. Students concurrently enrolled in high school classes with aptitude and desire to participate in this academic exercise were also considered.



The probation department provided supervisory staff, as well as transportation and funding for books. The residential arrangements were altered in order to create a "college dorm" which soon became a symbol of status among the residents at the camp. The staff of Saddleback College made an extraordinary effort to facilitate the paperwork involved in enrolling first time students and handled fee waiver arrangements.

The Pilot program began in the summer of 2000 with three students out of seven passing a Sociology 1 class. While this may seem unremarkable, the impact upon the camp population was profound. The status achieved by the college students was elevated to the point that many students who had previously never considered the prospect of higher education now requested to attend classes. The fall semester produced seven students that each earned six units in Psychology 1 and Sociology 10. By spring 2001, the commitment to the program was so strong that the probation department was transporting students to on-campus classes. At the end of this term there were 16 students at Los Pinos that had earned from 1 to 10 college units.

There were problems. The act of registering incarcerated students and obtaining the necessary information, documentation and fee waivers required commitment on the part of all parties. The students, most of whom have previously been unsuccessful in academic environments, had to produce work consistent with college standards. One incident where students escaped during an orientation session threatened to cancel the entire program, however all parties agreed that the benefits were worth the risks.

Based upon the aforementioned positive experience, the school and probation department agreed to hold one college class on-site in fall, 2001. The result was a Saddleback College Human Services in a Changing Society 100 class, held at Los Pinos Camp. The class began with 30 students and concluded with 25 students receiving passing grades. The class will be held again in Spring 2002 at Los Pinos Camp. A research project is currently under way to determine if the attitudes of the general population of incarcerated minors towards post-secondary education is affected by observing a group of their peers achieve success in college.

The college program is now an integral part of the Los Pinos program, and three students from the Fall 2001 class have enrolled in Saddleback College Human Services 110, a seminar class coupled with fieldwork consisting of evaluating and assessing rehabilitative and therapeutic programs at Los Pinos Conservation Camp.

The success of programs such as these are the result of dedicated staff willing to cooperate with each other and to collaborate with other agencies in order to focus on a central goal: returning juvenile offenders with the necessary skills and attitudes to be successful in mainstream society.

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