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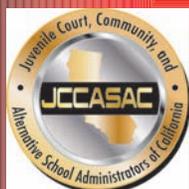
OF JUVENILE COURT, COMMUNITY, AND ALTERNATIVE  
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS OF CALIFORNIA

## *In this issue:*

**He who  
opens  
a school  
door,  
closes  
a prison.**

-Victor Hugo-

- **Push and Pull in Correctional Education**
- **Identifying Best Practices in Alternative Education: The Educational Options Research Project**
- **If At First They Don't Succeed: Leaders Create a Collaborative Partnership In Support of At-Risk Students**
- **Innovative Programs**



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# Message from the President

The Juvenile Court, Community, and Alternative School Administrators of California (JCCASAC) celebrate 40 years of service to children, youth, and adult learners. My message is simple. **Look to and learn from the past, live in and leverage the present, and plan and prepare for the future.** The past, present, and future of JCCASAC is the continuous story of ordinary individuals believing in the extraordinary impact of **hope**, a word that describes **“a cherished desire with expectation of fulfillment.”** (Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary) High expectations of a cherished desire that all students will embrace the process of learning: to speak, read, write, compute, think critically, act intentionally, and feel compassionately. The story of JCCASAC is not about an organization but the story of men and women who were, are, and will be called by a vision and mission to serve others whose potential has yet to be realized until touched by hope of another.

My message is one of gratitude. I humbly give thanks and appreciation to each past president of JCCASAC who served before me for sharing his/her dream, representing the collective vision of the California County Superintendent’s Educational Services Association (CCSESA) and the Student Programs Services Steering Committee (SPSSC) who collectively represent the administrators of County Offices of Education throughout our state committed to “Empowering Students, Impacting the Future.”

I want to express heart-felt recognition to the present JCCASAC board for their collective dedication to the rigorous challenge of working full-time positions as administrators of court, community and alternative programs throughout California and serving in a JCCASAC leadership role representing the diverse interests and needs of thousands of students and families. Those who are called to serve recognize the importance of accountability and boldly propose we account for the rate of reclaimed students “saved” from the dire consequences of “dropping-out” of the educational process. The JCCASAC board represents **all educators** who *reject failure as an option.*

We **hope** all students will succeed in graduating from high school, *a cherished desire with the expectation of fulfillment.* We **hope** all students will succeed in gaining post-secondary training and employment,

**a cherished desire with the expectation of fulfillment** and we **hope** all students will become productive contributing members of their community and society, **a cherished desire with the expectation of fulfillment.** Each generation hopes for a brighter future that commits us in the present to look to and learn from the past, live and leverage our resources and influence in the present and guide us in planning and preparing to transition our educational stewardship to those who are the future and will continue to have **hope**, *a cherished desire with the expectation of fulfillment, for all students.*

The future of JCCASAC rests with those who share the goal of hope. The story continues with each new president-elect, who recognizes the lessons of the past, who is prepared to act in the present to continue the efforts of JCCASAC to provide quality learning for all students and embraces the future by supporting the statewide commitment of County Offices of Education expressed in this year’s annual conference theme, “Empowering Students – Impacting the Future.”





**Mary Bell, Ed.D.**  
**Director III**  
**Sacramento County**  
**Office of Education**

# Message from the President-Elect

The past, present and future of high-quality education for all children does have ongoing, far-reaching and systemic links.

- Accountability, flexibility and tougher standards—a results oriented system (President George H.W. Bush, 1989)

- Higher standards and more accountability—a proven formula for success (President Bill Clinton, 2000)

- High standards and accountability—a school teaches and every child learns (President George W. Bush, 2004)

- High standards, high expectations and good preparation—a “new culture” of accountability in America’s school (Current President Barack Obama, 2009)

The Juvenile Court, Community and Alternative School Administrators of California (JCCASAC) is celebrating 40 years of high-quality education for disenfranchised students across the state. These administrators, teachers and support staff work diligently on a daily basis to empower students and to positively impact their lives in a manner that eliminates recidivism, that cultivates winning

attitudes and that inspires pride in successful outcomes. In essence, JCCASAC staff is in the business of “saving lives” (*save rate*) through high quality educational experiences based in holistic teaching and learning activities that students find meaningful.

It is not enough to work with students on academic standards; we must be sure they understand the standards and can provide evidence which demonstrates skill mastery, such as reading comprehension and mathematical calculations. It is not enough to understand the language of anger management; JCCASAC students must show mastery that is evidence-based, such as no fighting, no returns to Juvenile Hall, and practicing “win-win” conflict resolutions. It is not enough to say we taught career technical education or that students learned work-related job skills; we want to see those skills performed in paid internships, business/industry employment or extended learning commitments through trades union partnerships and higher educational institutions. Flexibility, accountability, high standards and high expectations are daily practices of JCCASAC schools, in spite of the transient nature of the student population. Nevertheless, in order to eliminate the “recidivism rate” and institute the “save rate,” America must reclaim its youth and demonstrate this by high visibility and meaningful participation in all schools across the state.

JCCASAC has a 40-year history of helping students who have struggled in traditional educational settings find hope and inspiration within themselves and the society in which they live. We hope this year’s JCCASAC Journal will help tell our story in a way that inspires educators, public school advocates, and all stakeholders throughout the state to embrace a new culture of accountability, high standards, flexibility, good preparation and high expectations. We believe that “new culture,” referred to by President Obama, values student input and is centered around relationships, rigor and relevance - nested in demonstrations of evidence-based learning for all children. Students must feel their educational experience includes them. They should be given opportunities to express their vision of career aspirations, esteem needs and self-actualization. Their educational experience should be inclusive of work toward that end. America’s children are America’s future.

Thank you for joining JCCASAC in celebration of 40 years of past-present-future student successes. We are, “Empowering Students, Impacting the Future!”



## JUVENILE COURT, COMMUNITY, AND ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS OF CALIFORNIA

### VISION

Under the direction of the County Superintendents, and as a sub-committee of the Student Programs and Services Steering Committee (SPSSC), JCCASAC is a professional educational organization dedicated to preparing students who are enrolled in county alternative educational programs to become self-sufficient adults who lead healthy lifestyles, and are competent, caring, and academically prepared for their futures.

### MISSION

The mission of JCCASAC is to support student success by creating a collegial network of County Office administrators who:

- Research and share best practices regarding new and innovative program options for at-risk students
- Provide training, support and assistance to new administrators
- Endorse and support legislation that advocates for the learning needs of all students
- Give input and guidance to the Superintendents relative to the diverse needs of our student population

### Goals

- Improve student achievement through research and sharing best practices
- Support special projects that enhance instructional programs
- Provide regular trainings for new county office administrators
- Conduct successful conferences with statewide representation
- Publish the JCCASAC Journal that informs superintendents, administrators, teachers, and affiliated agencies of the latest research, effective teaching practices, methodologies, and showcases successful programs
- Provide scholarships to eligible graduating seniors in order to encourage lifelong learning
- Represent JCCASAC through participation in statewide committees
- Monitor legislation affecting County Office alternative education programs
- Advocate for legislation and policies that support the unique needs of our student population





# Celebrating JCCASAC's 40th Anniversary



1970-71  
**Don Purdy**  
Santa Clara

1971-72  
**Chuck Lee**  
San Diego

1972-73  
**Doug Booth**  
San Mateo

1973-74  
**Joe De Mello**  
Contra Costa

1974-75  
**Marshall Lomax**  
Los Angeles

1975-76  
**John Hull**  
Sacramento

1976-77  
**Rocco Nobile**  
San Diego

1977-78  
**John Peshkoff**  
Santa Clara

1978-79  
**Jerry Matney**  
Orange

1979-80  
**Miltie Couteur**  
Butte

1980-81  
**Marty Familletti**  
Riverside

1981-82  
**Joe De Mello**  
Contra Costa

1982-83  
**Roy Savage**  
Riverside

1983-84  
**Ken Kammuller**  
Marin

1984-85  
**Wayne Toscas**  
Santa Barbara

1985-86  
**Greg Almand**  
Contra Costa

1986-87  
**Hedy Kirsh**  
Orange

1987-88  
**Shirl Schmidt**  
Shasta

1988-89  
**Chuck Lee**  
San Diego

1989-90  
**William Burns**  
San Mateo

1990-91  
**John Peshkoff**  
Orange

1991-92  
**Orene Hopkins**  
Contra Costa

1992-93  
**John Stankovich**  
Kings

1993-94  
**Bob Michels**  
Santa Clara

1994-95  
**Larry Springer**  
Los Angeles

1995-96  
**Claudette Inge**  
Alameda

1996-97  
**Ken Taylor**  
Kern

1997-98  
**Mick Founts**  
San Joaquin

1998-99  
**Dolores Redwine**  
San Diego

1999-00  
**Vic Trucco**  
Sonoma

2000-01  
**Janet Addo**  
Los Angeles

2001-02  
**Michael Watkins**  
Santa Cruz

2002-03  
**Jeanne Hughes**  
Kern

2003-04  
**Jacqueline Flowers**  
San Joaquin

2004-05  
**Jeanne Dukes**  
San Luis Obispo

2005-06  
**Paula Mitchell**  
Santa Clara

2006-2007  
**Maruta Gardner**  
San Diego

2007-2008  
**Peter Kostas**  
Mendocino

2008-2009  
**Mary Lou Vachet**  
Orange

## JCCASAC's Past Presidents



# One Picture

by

Deni Baughn

Orange County Department of Education

During a recent meeting, I happened to notice this picture laying on Paula Mitchell's desk (Santa Clara County Office of Education). It was tucked among several other pictures of herself and various county representatives - shaking hands with students enrobed in caps and gowns, proudly accepting their diplomas with powerfully emotional expressions of accomplishment.

But this picture stood out. It not only captured the pride of the student, but the pride this administrator took in seeing that student achieve success. It represented the commitment and dedication JCCASAC administrators take in their jobs. This isn't just a picture of Paula Mitchell, one of the State's many committed administrators, **it portrays the hope every administrator of county operated juvenile court and community schools holds for each child who enrolls in his/her schools and programs.**

Many articles have been written about the struggles students have to fight in order to overcome their barriers to success: gangs, homelessness, highly dysfunctional families and home lives, childhood traumas, sexual, physical and emotional abuse, neglect, drugs, hopelessness. But the battles against these 'barriers' are not fought solely by the students. They are also fought by the teachers, administrators and support personnel who stand side by side, day after day, as the students wage war against these barriers. It is a battle. But the weapons of war with these students is patience, knowledge (academic, social, intrapersonal), counseling, encouragement, acceptance, role modeling, hope,

and did I mention patience? Success for these students isn't learned though textbooks - we all wish it were that easy - it comes from deep within the people who give these students hope where they have only experienced hopelessness.

Sometimes one picture is worth a million words.



Stephanie at her graduation with Paula Mitchell, Director of Alternative Schools Department, Santa Clara County Office of Education.

# Push and Pull in Correctional Education

by Thom Gehring

## Abstract

Correctional educators work in environments that are often hostile toward teaching and learning. To survive (perhaps flourish) we are constantly assessing our abilities and weaknesses, identifying strategies that can be effective in the institutional setting, and working to diminish our vulnerability to anti-education influences. This article is about influences in our lives that are rarely discussed openly—the roles of purpose and intuition in our patterns of professional identity. It is based on the idea that every bit of clarity we can harness to our teaching and learning agenda can help us to (a) overcome, negotiate, or transcend institutional constraints, or at least to (b) navigate through them with minimal negative impact to students, the program, and ourselves. The article proposes that the most effective correctional educators apply open minds and warm hearts to their daily work. It is directed to a demystification of these intuitive influences, and a tentative explanation of the telos that draws us into the future—our fate, destiny, or purpose.

## The Blues Brothers

My wife Carolyn and I got two male kittens from the local animal shelter. Carolyn named them Jake and Elwood, after the infamous Blues Brothers, two of the cultural heroes in our family pantheon. One day I watched Jake and Elwood trying to manipulate a plastic pen. They like pens because they are good toys. If they get a running start and jump on a pen on the kitchen tile floor, they can get a good six foot slide—like a kitty skateboard. That is great fun.

This day the pen was on a table, right beside a round napkin holder. They both tried and tried, but were unable to manipulate the pen into a place where they could play with it. I saw the problem: they were unable to differentiate when to push or pull, their motions were random. Ultimately it turned out they lacked the discipline or dedication to continue their struggle to fruition. Jake and Elwood are not too smart—indeed, that is how they earned their names.

I wondered how this push and pull problem would manifest for humans. In Pia-

get's terms, the kittens are clearly in the sensory motor stage—they have not even mastered concrete objects. By contrast, most mature humans would be in the formal operations stage, with abstract ideas, or perhaps even in the post formal operations stage, which some have speculated stretches toward the mystical. From the formal operations view, it seemed that the human analogy for the cats' push/pull confusion would be confusion between causal and teleological influences. Most of us are familiar with causality. If I push a chair, it moves. The "push" is the cause; the chair moves and that is the effect. Western science searches obsessively for causal influences, for the push.

By contrast, the telos is fate, destiny, or a purpose that "pulls" us forward. Sometimes events unfold in a way that, in retrospect, seem best. I am certainly not smart about all this. But like many, I suspect there are forces at work outside my comprehension. For example, who among us intended from an early age to work in correctional education? (As a child I wanted to be a cowboy or a garbage man.) Yet

here we all are, working to transform prisons and prisoners, and being transformed ourselves in the process. Is possible that the telos is at work here, in addition to our own conscious decisions? Of course it is—so let us consider the possibilities.

### Some Central Assumptions that Might Apply

Some things are rarely discussed, especially in the research literature. For example, despite grand self-concepts, researchers (and educators) do not know everything—are not even on the verge of knowing everything. Physicians are stumped by the common cold; educators by the drop out rate; correctional educators by the recidivism rate, etc. Biologists have been promising for centuries to find the reasons for crime in heredity, nutrition, brain chemistry, but they never have. Despite professional demeanor, most of us are as ignorant as children. We might do better to admit ignorance, start off fresh and learn our way through the problems we so frequently create.

Second, most of us cannot track with the things we do know. Complexity at work can overwhelm, like simultaneous physical motions. For example, we move on the planet's surface, which turns daily and orbits the Sun. Our solar system moves within the galaxy, which travels through space as part of a cluster. Meanwhile, the universe is expanding. There may be additional movements. We cannot monitor all these motions, despite our understanding of each separately. And it is likely that the same problem applies in our professional work. So third, we must interpret complex processes with reason plus intuition. Wilber (2000) called this approach "transrational," because it includes both rational "head" and intuitive "heart." Einstein reported: "I did not discover relativity by rational thinking alone" (in Goswami, 2001, p. 30).

Fourth, the best preparation for transrationality is to keep our minds open and our hearts warm. This is how most correctional educators work—our cognitive and affective abilities facilitate student learning. We are masters of transrationality, though the term itself may be new. Fifth, despite our experiences in different situations, and our various aspirations—we are all here and now. Our "right now" work is correctional education, the organized effort to transform prisoners and prisons. So we should apply our internal and external resources to the tasks at hand.

Sixth, we should become aware of certain blessings we enjoy. Some are large, often overlooked blessings: (a) during the last few centuries earth's climate has been unusually conducive to our species, (b) despite absurd wars instigated by dominator hierarchies, most North Americans have experienced a remarkable period of peace since the end of World War II. Whether we have acknowledged it or not, we enjoy abundantly favorable conditions.

Seventh, once we consider the fiercely self-reliant lipservice of the American rant, we become aware of the interconnection of all things. Even ideologues trying to convince themselves they are in charge of their own fate would die if they were truly independent. The food they eat comes from afar, thanks to the work of others, as do the materials of which their homes are made.

Eighth, we are connected to the students in our classes in many ways. Educators who are committed to teaching are also learners themselves (though usually at a different educational level than their students). Most teachers have versions of the attitude problems that afflict students. For example, I frequently feel sorry for myself because I have more work than time to do it. And I lack patience, just like my students. By almost any

... the best preparation for transrationality is to keep our minds open and our hearts warm. This is how most correctional educators work—our cognitive and affective abilities facilitate student learning.

standard, I have an attitude problem analogous to the documented affective deficits of most confined students. And I need more enthusiasm.

Ninth, honesty reveals that past practice is flawed—our systems have continuously failed for more than 200 years. Institutions failed as dungeons, monasteries, factories, hospitals, and warehouses. On this Jean Rousseau and correctional educator Mary Carpenter agreed: “. . .if the present system has totally failed, there must be something radically wrong in it, and it ought to be changed (Carpenter, 1864/1969, p. 218). In short, past practice is bad practice.

Finally, in the face of these realities rarely addressed by researchers, we might see the merit of humility over arrogance, admitting how little we know rather than bragging that we have all the answers. Matthew 18:3 (KJV) urges we “. . .become as little children.” Better to admit that we only have a vague notion of what we are doing than to pretend to be experts in all things.

### “Push” and “Pull”

Remember, the “push” we experience daily is from cause and effect, from causality. We track external influences and our internal

urge to get things done. We spend our lives developing “power” to overcome our “burdens.” Power includes qualifications, skills, a livable income, a network of friends to help us through difficult times. Burdens include resource inadequacy at work, muddled public perceptions of correctional education, and anti-education institutions. These are all related to the push. The pull fits better with the mystery of life, at least at our current level of understanding. This influence is the telos, AKA fate or destiny, the purpose that is unfolding in the universe. Because this is a relatively unexplored topic, we may benefit from examining some concrete elements that contribute to teleological influences.

### Elements of the “Pull”

One way to summarize cognitive or cognitive-moral growth (outlined by Piaget, Kohlberg, Gilligan, Loevinger, etc.) is of ever increasing ability to abstract the world and contain the abstractions in our minds. I can discuss ideas because I have language and literacy—powers that cats lack. Jake and Elwood act as if they can know everything about something by sniffing it.

A second element of the telos in our daily lives is our own aspirations. Austin MacCor-

**Figure 1: A Principle and Ten Corollaries**

Principle:	We should admit that the world is more mysterious than we usually acknowledge.
Corollary 1:	We do not know everything.
Corollary 2:	We cannot even monitor the things we do know.
Corollary 3:	Rationality and intuition (“head” and “heart”) are more effective when combined than when either is used without the other.
Corollary 4:	In correctional education we do best to combine an open mind with a warm heart.
Corollary 5:	Despite all our different life experiences and professional aspirations, we are correctional educators—we need a “here and now” agenda.
Corollary 6:	Though often unrecognized, we have each enjoyed great blessings in our lives.
Corollary 7:	All things are interconnected, despite everyday perceptions and aspirations.
Corollary 8:	The students in our classes are not the only ones who need a better attitude; most of what we hope to accomplish could be facilitated with enthusiasm—a better attitude.
Corollary 9:	Past practice is flawed.
Corollary 10:	We will do best to acknowledge how much we do not know, to be humble and admit we are like children.

**Figure 2: Tasks for Correctional Educators in the New Millennium**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Subjective</b></p> <p>NAVIGATE: Steer the self system through constraints and supports, to accomplish one’s life purpose.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Objective</b></p> <p>PROFESSIONALIZE: Access useful information; study and learn, to support teaching and learning.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Cultural</b></p> <p>NETWORK: Mobilize professionals through their schools of thought.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Social</b></p> <p>STRUGGLE: For equality, democracy, and freedom; against predatory imperialism, racism, war, sexism, and genocide.</p>

mick was always writing and speaking about the high aims of correctional education; he established the Correctional Education Association and the *Journal of Correctional Education*. Alexander Maconochie began the correctional paradigm at a British penal colony in the South Pacific in the 1840s and Zebulon Brockway brought Maconochie’s system to the U.S. in 1876. They both had high aims. The essence of correctional education is the organized effort to reform or transform prisoners and prisons, to transform prisons into schools. That is a high aim.

Another element that draws us toward our purpose is our own professionalization. How can we professionalize correctional education? I recently introduced four relevant professional tasks for the third millennium, rooted in the idea that prisons reflect global, historic forces.

A fourth telos element is our uneven personal development. For example, I might be mature in my reading habits but immature when it comes to financial planning, and average in my sense of duty to community. Others would not encounter three personalities, but one—my “center of gravity” or general functioning level. Like the impact of my aspirations on my behavior (element #2 above), my uneven personal development fosters growth toward my “higher” self.

A fifth element of teleological influence is evident when we reach a stage Wilber calls “second tier” (2000, p. 135). In a nutshell, second tier is a mature level of cognitive or cogni-

tive-moral functioning in which a person finally realizes there are many potential strategies that can be applied to accomplish any particular goal. First tier contains six different versions of “the Truth”, adherents to each believe only their version will work, so they deny the others and persecute those who advocate those respective ways of thinking. By contrast, second tier thinking finds some merit in each of the six approaches, and accepts that any of them might work out to attain the goal, so long as it is implemented in an effective way. Second tier thinking is aligned with the telos because it opens up possibilities that would be inconceivable to persons operating at first tier.

A sixth element is what Wilber calls transrationality. As Sorokin, an expert on issues social and cultural, proclaimed "The only source of . . .self-evident. . .postulates and axioms is intuition" (1985, p. 684). Consider: you never see the term Eureka! (I have found it!) without the exclamation point that signifies the intuitive “aha”, It transcends rationality, without negating rationality. Epiphany seems to come from nowhere, or from everywhere—the important part is that it is intuitive. Sorokin called it "mystic intuition" (pp. 684, 688). To identify how this applies in correctional education, we turn to William George and Thomas Mott Osborne, who became intuitively aware that democratic management principles could be applied "inside".

Suddenly George was jolted . . . he later wrote, 'Our Glorious Republic in miniature—a Junior Republic—and I recall

shouting at the top of my voice, I have it—I have it—I have it; and like a school boy I ran as fast as my legs could carry me, and told my mother. I felt it to have been a God-given idea.' (George, in Holl, 1971, p. 100).

Osborne's sentiment about prison democracy was similar: "I have not a single theory or idea about this prison game that I am not ready to alter or throw away the moment it bumps up against a fact." (Osborne, 1924, pp. 44-45)

Perhaps one of the biggest impediments to our own innate intuitive capability is the teaching models we apply. In education the medical model is called the diagnostic-prescriptive method. Both of these focus on the professional's perceived function: diagnosing the problems of others, prescribing remedial activities, and monitoring the "cure". For good reason correctional educators frequently criticize the medical model in its corrections applications. But then the same correctional educators advocate the diagnostic-prescriptive model for classroom applications. That is a double standard because they are both the same. Also, in the medical model/diagnostic-

prescriptive method the change agent is not supposed to be impacted by the change process. All the engineered changes are to be experienced by the client; the professional/teacher is thought not to need change; all interactions are one way—and that is another double standard.

A seventh element is that, despite our lipservice to the contrary, most correctional educators apply their gut understandings all the time. For example, despite the emphasis on computers and digital instruction, most of us intuitively know that machines cannot turn people's lives around; only people can do that. And we know that, even when appearances suggest no learning progress is being made, progress is in fact being experienced though not expressed.

Eighth, most prison workers intuitively grasp that—despite all the outward impressions of "eternal" conditions—nothing is more certain than change itself. We work hard anticipating positive change (learning); correctional officers work hard anticipating negative change (riots).

Finally, the telos' pull is consistent with the overall pattern of human growth. We know this to be true from our everyday work

### Figure 3: Summarizing the Pull Toward Human Progress, Experienced as the Telos

1. The human ability to abstract things to ideas inclines us naturally toward growth, development, maturation.
2. Personal and shared aspirations, even politically correct lipservice, can set the pace for how progress will unfold.
3. The professionalization of correctional education can drive and expand the progress we attain in our field.
4. The uneven personal/professional growth that we all experience allows us to imagine and advocate progress, and articulate its attributes.
5. Second tier thinking, an effect of maturation that allows us to pursue goals through various approaches instead of relying solely on one, enhances our opportunities for success by expanding our repertoire of effective strategies.
6. Transrationality—the combination of head and heart to improve problem selection and decision-making—can be a potent tool for manifesting progress.
7. We apply transrationality by being alert to our gut feelings, our common sense.
8. Despite appearances, change is inevitable, so progress is possible.
9. The direction of the telos is consistent with growth; from dependence toward autonomy, self-actualization, and readiness to learn.

**Figure 4: Suggested Indicators of the Telos in Action, Based on Personal Experience**

1. Loss of a sense of time when working toward one's mission (tend to neglect time passing).
2. Useful information becomes available through dreams or intuitive leaps.
3. Profound sense of joy or accomplishment ("following your bliss"), even when there are no real events or trends to report.
4. Intense, unaccountable feelings of well being.
5. Repeated experience of epiphany; direct appreciation of how all things are connected.
6. Diminished sense of being victimized by others, or by conditions.
7. Lessened awareness of having to rush throughout the day's activities.
8. Diminished relation between inputs and outputs—some tasks get accomplished expeditiously; some longstanding or pressing problem(s) seem to solve themselves, often in ways that are dramatically complex, or dramatically simple, efficient, or effective.
9. Personal responses very different from one's own earlier responses to the same stimulus.
10. Generalized sense of thankfulness/gratefulness/appreciation.
11. New or especially intense willingness to forgive the flaws of others.
12. Increased attachment to/identification with the struggles and accomplishments of all life forms.
13. Surprising, unaccountable urge to help a person or a cause.
14. General sensitivity to, or awareness of, the telos' pull toward a specific task or outcome

with offenders. Maslow's self-actualization means moving from an external locus of control (push) to an internal locus of control (pull). This direction of maturation is regulated by the telos' alignment with our aspirations, our higher selves.

How can one know when the telos is working in one's life? Figure 4 shows attributes I have experienced, contrary to logical expectations—that may indicate teleological influence.

#### The Pull Toward Correctional Education Professional Identity

We should be concerned about the telos because we seek a single rather than a double standard—one that applies for both students and teachers. We normally apply the external/internal locus of control concept to inmate students, but not to ourselves as correctional educators. We describe students as impetuous and lacking in goal-setting skills. Yet the "student as teacher and teacher as student" formula (which allows teachers to be human and accounts for our own development) sug-

gests we should apply the same standard to ourselves. How would correctional educators with an internal locus of control be different from those with an external locus?

Herein lies the heart of correctional education. Active in a part of the human drama that unfolds under pressure in a closed, complex social environment, we should be able, willing, and open—to align with our telos, which is aligned with our highest aspirations. What alternative do we have but to acknowledge that we are impacted by the mysterious universe? It is therefore our duty to take that required leap of consciousness, that act of faith that will be supported by a purposeful universe. In other words, we must develop a proactive pattern of professional identity.

The standard we apply to inmate student growth is "attitudes, skills, and knowledge," in that order (the reverse of the local school approach). We prepare them for gainful employment not because a job is inherently good, but because employed persons tend to have more, be more, than non-employed persons—and are better citizens, neighbors, individuals. We focus on attitudes because the cor-

EXTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROLINTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL

1. Behaves Passively
2. Consumes without thinking
3. Tends to assimilate in any social context
4. Maintains existing systems (conventional)
5. Consumes emotional energy
6. Identifies self as an accident of the universe
7. Rethinks everything when faced with problems
8. Seeks external resources
9. Is fragmented or conflicted in response to many perceived struggles
10. Is conflicted or confused about issues
11. Experiences insecurity and interpersonal impotence
12. Identifies as a victim
13. Feels socially invisible
14. Feels alien in most settings (a stranger)
15. Acts individually
16. Seeks (never finds) meaning/confirmation
17. Is driven by exterior events

1. Behaves with engagement, as an activist
2. Contributes consciously
3. Tends to be rooted in a discrete school of thought
4. Innovates to improve the world (transformative)
5. Radiates emotional energy (enthusiasm)
6. Identifies self as a purpose of the universe
7. Responds ideologically to problems; periodically rethinks the ideology
8. Applies internal resources
9. Is dedicated and disciplined, with unity of purpose
10. Acts out of a strong sense of commitment
11. Experiences security; feels interpersonally empowered
12. Self actualizes, with self determination
13. Feels confident
14. Feels part of the fabric of the universe
15. Acts individually, but also socially, culturally
16. Finds meaning, confirmation in everyday events
17. Is driven by interior purpose

rectional education improvement program is not about exteriors but about interiors.

And so the same must apply to ourselves as well as to students, a single standard. Our effort to improve the program reflects our aspiration to improve ourselves, our interior and individual (subjective) selves and our interior and shared (cultural) selves. The measure of progress is not whether we access high tech gadgets, or even whether we have enough texts and desks. Rather it is whether we acquire integrity (intrapersonally), credibility (interpersonally), and effectiveness (personally) as correctional educators. We must articulate community principles that others find compelling. To what extent can we navigate through life's supports and constraints? Resist institutional dehumanization? Unite with colleagues to advocate effective programming?

The best measure of our work is about the internal resources we bring to bear (leadership), not about the external resources we have (funding, equipment). You are the best resource students can access; your effectiveness rests on your ability to stimulate them to self-improvement. Pursuit of external resources can distract without also pursuing

self-improvement. Our task (students and teachers alike; my task and your task) is to develop into better people (to master ourselves), not to become masters of inanimate things. To be a good teacher, one has to be a good person: able and willing, nurturing and disciplined, teaching and learning, as an individual and as a team member.

The tug of the telos suggests (a) our brains are wired more like antenna than like the current stand-alone computer paradigm, and (b) the interpersonal model of communication should be replaced with one that is both interpersonal and intrapersonal. In other words, teleological communication between our everyday selves and our higher selves is at least as important as communication with each other, allowing us to function collectively, as well as independently.

It all comes down to mediation, the sequencing and explanation of what is learned. In cognitive theory mediation is the theme of Piaget (in his self-mediation model), Vygotsky (in the zone of proximal development), and Feuerstein (in mediated learning experience). We need to mediate our own learning, to maximize it. Mediated learning is also part of all religions, spiritual traditions, and practices (it

is the work of the Holy Spirit, the prophets, of angels and saints, of exemplars and sages). Most North Americans are monotheists—they believe in the One. From this perspective, an accurate description of life is that we are here to represent the One who sent us. Yet how will we align our thinking and action with the One if we do not hear the One voice?

Some historical periods were characterized by unity, but ours is clearly fragmented. Shall we align ourselves with the fragmented causal pushes, or with the One pull of the telos? If we are serious about accepting the work that is given to us, we must try to get past the many influences that result in conflict and confusion. We must become alert to the One voice of the telos.

The difference between being conflicted (as in correctional educators who think they are not correctional educators) and unity of purpose is merely a state of mind. Consider Mary Carpenter's 1852 approach, which largely accounts for her success in English juvenile facilities: "Let me only humbly and earnestly go on with the work in which I have been abundantly 'blessed'" (Carpenter, J.E., 1974/1881, p. 131). Unity of purpose requires dedication, and the discipline that accrues from being alert to one's function or purpose, the voice of the telos.

Wilber wrote of what I call the push, from the One toward the many—what Sorokin called the sensuous (based on data from the five senses, as in the sight of a beautiful sunset). He also wrote of the pull, from the many toward the One (personal growth and development). We are all capable of each, but overreliance on one puts our social and emotional selves out of balance. Both paths have merit, the push and the pull. We always have choices. We can be either pushed by the many (conflicted, confused, fragmented) or pulled by the One (toward unity of purpose).

Insight about our work will not be found in the cacophony of screaming voices, but in our own purpose.

Modern people tend to be out of balance—to emphasize the push and limit or exclude the pull from our daily lives. Students in one of my courses respond to a question: Why are we all crazy? They admit they are crazy: chasing too many agendas, hurrying, overworked, harried, out of balance. We need to refocus on the teleological pull, to find peace of mind. Insight about our work will not be found

in the cacophony of screaming voices, but in our own purpose. Based on Wright, R. (ed.). (2008) *In the borderlands: Learning to teach in prisons and alternative settings*. San Bernardino: California State University, pp. 75-100.

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# 2008-2009 Best Practice in Educational Options Schools and Program Research Project

Wendell J. Callahan and Stephanie Johnston

## Introduction:

In a joint project, the San Diego County Office of Education and the Educational Options Office of the California Department of Education continue the review and dissemination of best practices in California Educational Options schools and programs. In December 2008, a committee of representatives from alternative education professional organizations, the California Department of Education and WestEd reviewed 20 proposals submitted from California continuation high schools, community day schools, as well as court and community schools. The professional organizations represented on the review committee included Community Day Schools Network (CDSNet), California Consortium for Independent Study

(CCIS), California Continuation Education Association (CCEA) and Juvenile Court, Community and Alternative Schools Administrators of California (JCCASAC). The proposals highlighted best practices in the following domains: Curriculum, Instruction and Educational Technology; Assessment, Evaluation and Data Management; Student Support, Retention and Transition; and Leadership and Staff Development. Six proposals demonstrating best practices were selected and will be presented at upcoming professional conferences. Information about these schools and programs will be compiled and disseminated to the Educational Options community throughout California via the San Diego County Office of Education's website ([www.sdcoe.net/edoptions](http://www.sdcoe.net/edoptions)). The following are narratives of the best practices selected for 2008-09.

*\*note: Schools are not listed in any particular order*



## *Congratulations to the Selected Best Practice Schools* *2009*



## Math 2 Success

### San Diego County Office of Education

The San Diego Juvenile Court and Community Schools (JCCS) is under the auspices of the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE). San Diego County's Juvenile Court and Community Schools are located throughout San Diego County and consist of approximately 66 school sites, 179 teachers and an average daily enrollment of approximately

2,900 students. Student enrollment in JCCS includes adjudicated youth, homeless students and students who have been referred by their districts of residence. The San Diego County Juvenile Court and Community Schools collaborated with SDCOE's Instructional Television (ITV) to create a standards-based mathematics show that would be both rigorous and

relevant for JCCS students, as well as students throughout San Diego County.



What resulted from this collaboration was the television show, *Math 2 Success*, which is research based television program designed to improve students' mathematical performance on the CAHSEE, CST, and SAT exams. According to the Executive

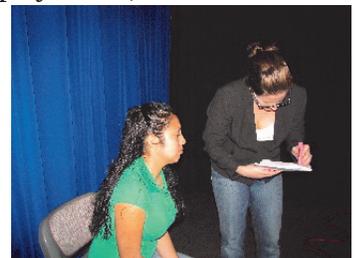
Director of ITV, 2,600 teachers in San Diego County were surveyed, and 84% of respondents asked ITV to deliver test preparation programming for CAHSEE, SAT, and CST. These teachers also cited on-line access to such a program as a key to greater student interest. In addition, the survey revealed that besides test preparation, teachers needed something for students to make the connection to how math in the classroom is used in the real world. Coincidentally, JCCS teachers were asking for exactly the same thing.

JCCS, ITV, and the SDCOE Learning Resources and Educational Technologies Division began to collaborate to ensure the success of this project. The LRET division and ITV began to develop a program to meet academic rigors with engaging content to sustain television viewer interest. The most up-to-date test score data was used to determine which mathematical standards to focus.

It was decided that JCCS teachers and students would provide the talent for the mathematics television show. JCCS students were chosen who had strong math abilities, were not on probation, and exhibited very *large* personalities. San Diego JCCS teachers are known for their creativity and innovation and often employ unique teaching strategies in order to make connections with some of their more challenging students. It was these teachers using effective strategies that were highlighted in the program.

In each program teachers and students begin the show by working out a CAHSEE problem. The problem is worked through quickly and then viewers are directed to the *Math 2 Success* website if they want to see the problem solved again. The same problem is then analyzed and discussed with a second "talent" who has joined the show. This same format, solving a problem, and then analyzing it, is then used for CST and SAT problems. ITV's Executive Director, determined each problem should be solved in about two minutes, to keep the show moving quickly and to keep student interest.

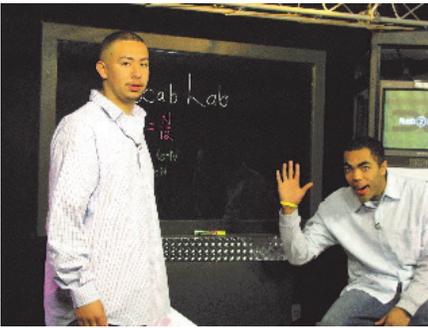
In another segment of the show, *Vocab Lab* uses math vocabulary with a game show feel. A host gives clues, and a contestant tries to figure out the answer. While the clues can sometimes be corny, the dialogue is often purposely funny to help students better remember vocabulary terms. This is key for students who have language poverty or who are English learners. In order to make *Math 2 Success* relevant for students, it was necessary to make a connection from the classroom to the real world. *Math 2 Success* features segments titled *Real World Math*. The segment focuses on various professions, many in San Diego County, and asks people from these professions how they use math on a daily basis. Some of the *Real World Math* segments have included a hip hop artist, sculptor, physicist, and skate park designer. The *Real World Math* segments are also available for viewing on the *Math 2 Success* website.



The *Math 2 Success* website, [www.math2success.net](http://www.math2success.net), gets about 1500 hits per day. The largest number of hits happens between 4pm and 5pm which is when the show is aired, and it is assumed students go to the website during the show or immediately after to review the problem. The other peak time is between 6am and 8am. It is assumed that teachers throughout San Diego

County are utilizing the website during that time for lesson planning.

JCCS has utilized the show to its fullest. Clips of the show were presented at every JCCS



math professional development. Many JCCS teachers utilized the clips as part of their daily classroom warm-ups or assignments. Stu-

dents who were chosen to be a talent on the show had their fellow classmates, friends, and families watching the show. This introduced a whole new audience to the Instructional Television programming.

The students who filmed segments of *Math 2 Success* experienced additional bene-

fits from participating in filming. The experience provided the students an even greater opportunity of career exploration. They were able to get a behind the scenes look at a small television studio. A typical show had two to three camera operators, a director, two sound engineers, and a minimum of three talents on the set. Not only were students able to put this experience on a resume, but doors were opened to careers they had never previously considered. Additional evidence that reinforces this program's success is that the San Diego County Office of Education received enough positive feedback on the program to fund it for another year. JCCS students and staff have already started filming season two!



## Professional Learning Communities

### Mendocino County Office of Education

The Mendocino County Office of Education (MCOE) Alternative Education programs are scattered throughout Mendocino County in Northern California. The Alternative Education programs are comprised of 10 educational programs ranging from grades 6 through 12. The programs encompass a Community Day School, Community Schools, Independent Study, and Court Schools.

The Alternative Education Programs serve probation and juvenile court referred, expelled, SARB referred habitual truants, pregnant and parenting teens and their children, and incarcerated youth. The student body reflects the diversity of the community with students that are Hispanic Latino, African-American, Caucasian, and Native American with approximately 90% of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch. As can be ascer-

tained, the students enrolled with MCOE Alternative Education Programs are at-risk and require an array of services. Many of these students also come to the programs with large achievement gaps in mathematics and English/Language Arts as a result of mobility, discipline, or truancy.

Over the past five years MCOE Alternative Education programs have been working towards improving student achievement. This has been accomplished through the adoption, purchase, and daily use of standards aligned curriculum. Armed with standards aligned curriculum MCOE began the long journey of change. This change involved a paradigm shift that had a renewed focus on direct instruction and differentiation to meet the needs of all students. The hard work equated to substantial increases in the passage rates (grade 10)

on the CAHSEE ELA from 31% in 05/06 to 60% in 07/08. However, a closer examination of this data coupled with other sources told us that our students needed an intensive intervention for writing.

Faced with a major academic challenges during a time of limited resources, we turned to our teachers and support staff for assistance. At the end of the 07/08 school year we completed the High School Academic Program Survey in an attempt to collectively determine the needs of the school. The survey indicated that the schools three key areas of need involved a consistent and ongoing assessment system, instructional coaching, and collaboration. In response to these needs MCOE Alternative Education programs purchased the Data-Director data warehouse to store data and create exams, and began to develop the framework for implementing the Professional Learning Communities (P.L.C.s) model.

PLCs are an instructional organizational model that is supported by various educational organizations and has proven to be a **cost effective** way to dramatically improve student achievement. However, the true power in PLCs is staff buy-in and empowerment. In order to ensure a smooth transition, we first introduced the idea to the leadership team, explaining the various components and the possible benefits for students and staff. With the agreement of the leadership team we then began to develop a framework for implementation.

The basis of PLCs revolves around four essential questions: 1) What do we want students to know? 2) How will we know when they know it? 3) What will we do when they don't? 4) What will we do when they do? As a group we reviewed our mission statement and identified our core values. After the establishment of our vision, we reviewed aca-

demical, suspension, and attendance data in order to establish goals. We agreed that all our programs should focus on the CAHSEE standards and that writing was a major need.

In response to this need we reviewed the curriculum (Character Based Literacy) and aligned it to key CAHSEE writing standards. We then developed a pacing guide that outlined a series of writing benchmark tests that would be administered during the school year. Each benchmark was aligned to the writing genre or skill taught in the previous four weeks, thus allowing for evaluation using summative and formal assessments. The formal assessment was common across all classrooms and was graded using the same rubric. This assessment was then taken to the PLC meeting in which the results are discussed and SMART goals created.

In order to help facilitate this process we developed best practices binders that included the CAHSEE ELA Blueprints, released test items, pacing calendar, and data analysis forms. In addition, the

staff received training about meeting protocols and how to use each of the binders to aid in the implementation of this model. Furthermore, an instructional coach was strategically placed on each PLC to offer support and accountability.

This practice has not only improved student achievement in writing, but has congealed and empowered a geographically isolated staff. Many of the teachers have been working in isolation with no real structured contact with other programs and no way to truly evaluate their own practice. This process has encouraged networking and collaboration among teachers which has strengthened the educational program offered to students. In a system of school renewal, progressive change isn't special occasion, but an everyday event.

This process has encouraged networking and collaboration among teachers which has strengthened the educational program offered to students.



# Data Chats Raise Test Scores

## Merced County Office of Education

Valley Community School (VCS) is a court and community school located in Merced, California. Student mobility is extremely high at VCS with the average student enrolled for only 45 days, which impacts the reliability of standardized testing and accountability. In addition, most students enrolled at VCS are not internally motivated to take standardized testing seriously and rarely give assessments their full effort.

With this in mind, VCS staff collaboratively brainstormed ideas and strategies the school could use to encourage and motivate students to take testing and assessments seriously, apply their knowledge, and actually fill in the answer document while at the same time, refraining from making designs in the bubbles. The concept of 'Data Chats' was brought to light after a staff member shared what a local comprehensive high school was implementing with their students. As with all alternative programs, traditional methods usually need to be modified to meet the needs of our students.

Data Chats became the primary focus for a group of twenty staff members. The 'Data Chatters' were composed of instructional and classified staff, administrators, counselors and probation officers. The team felt strongly that students engage in Data Chats with a variety of staff members. It was imperative to convey to the students that everyone thought the entire process of Data Chats and testing results mattered. Several trainings were held with 'chatters' and Independent Studies staff to discuss protocol for chats, interpretation of student scores, and to answer any questions the chat staff members may have for counselors and administration regarding student data. The chatters put together a packet which in-

cluded the following pieces for staff and student chats: a) Data Chats Talking Points – questions and areas to cover while talking with students, b) Student Data Chat Goal Sheet – document scores from prior tests and set goals for current year, c) RIT Score Poster – compare pre and post NWEA scores with STAR and CAHSEE passage rates, and d) CST Performance Level Scale Score Ranges. Chatters also put up signs reading '350' throughout the campus, and students were asked regularly by staff members what the number meant. Amazingly, within a week, students could explain how this number related to several assessments they take within the year. Testing language was used by everyone to reinforce Valley Community Schools' commitment to improving learning and test scores.

Valley staff members began to implement the Data Chats process three weeks prior to the STAR test administration. Every student sat one-on-one with a staff member for 10-15 minutes to review their individual Aeries testing page(s), receive an explanation of what each test score meant to the student and their future, and to make sure that the Student Data Chat Goal Sheet was completely filled out and signed by both students and data chatter. By signing the agreement, each student agreed to apply themselves on the test to meet their goal, and the data chatter acknowledged their responsibility to visit them and to provide support and encouragement.

Instructional staff provided exceptionally positive feedback from students' comments after meeting with their data chatter. Overall, students were genuinely surprised by their scores, enjoyed meeting with a staff member they haven't had to deal with in a disciplinary or

crisis situation, and felt more aware of what was expected of them related to all required testing, not just STAR.

Chatters were provided a list of their students and were held accountable for following up with their 'testing team'. Students were openly excited and their affect filter levels dropped when they heard encouraging words from their data chatter. This piece proved to be the most important, because it linked the data chat agreement with taking the test before them seriously and applying their knowledge. Teachers provided feedback to data chatters about students based on their list, whether positive or negative, and the chatters were to make sure their testing team members knew they would be following up on teacher feedback. Students who never took their class work and testing seriously prior to this process were found to be working diligently on their tests, using all the time allotted to complete sections, reading the entire passage to answer questions, asking teachers for assistance and there was not one testing booklet turned in during the most recent administration with 'designs' bubbled into the answer document.

STAR testing results would be the empirical measurement of the Data Chats process. We

found a positive correlation between student participation and number of students within testing levels. Normally, as the number of students increases, we see a drop in scores with higher percentages in Far Below Basic and Below Basic testing results. Comparison results are shown in table 1.

From the results, it is not possible to attribute the data chats to all growth, especially with the mobile population and that many of the students being compared from 2007 and 2008 are not the same group of students. However, scores are not the only variable being measured. Staff knowledge related to testing has increased and students are using testing language during conversations.

During the 2008-2009 academic school year, Valley Community School counselors will implement this program district-wide, with all Valley sites participating in Data Chats. It is our hope that scores will improve, but most importantly, that staff and students alike begin to establish positive relationships and rapport during their chats and follow up. Valley Community School students deserve this time and opportunity, and they should be empowered with knowledge of their abilities to improve upon and to continue to strive for success.

**English Language Arts 2007 and 2008 Comparison**

	9	10	11	
	2007			Total Included
Reported Enrollment	97	209	262	568
Students Tested	96	205	252	553
				97%
	ELA			
Proficient	1%	1%	1%	
Basic	19%	12%	7%	
Below Basic	39%	34%	24%	
Far Below Basic	40%	53%	66%	

	9	10	11	
	2008			Total Included
Reported Enrollment	120	184	273	577
Students Tested	118	181	265	564
				98%
	ELA			
Proficient	5%	2%	1%	
Basic	28%	13%	10%	
Below Basic	39%	36%	30%	
Far Below Basic	25%	49%	59%	

**Algebra 2007 and 2008 Comparison**

	9	10	11	
	2007			Total Included
Reported Enrollment	97	209	262	568
Students Tested	89	188	232	509
				90%
	Algebra			
Proficient	0%	0%	1%	
Basic	1%	5%	6%	
Below Basic	42%	43%	42%	
Far Below Basic	57%	43%	51%	

	9	10	11	
	2008			Total Included
Reported Enrollment	120	184	273	577
Students Tested	104	174	241	519
				90%
	Algebra			
Proficient	0%	0%	0%	
Basic	4%	7%	8%	
Below Basic	59%	47%	51%	
Far Below Basic	38%	47%	41%	

# Truancy Response Program

## Orange County Department of Education

ACCESS (Alternative, Community, Correctional, Education, Schools, and Services) provides educational options to approximately 8,000 students in Orange County. ACCESS provides classroom programs and services on a daily basis and continually strives to meet the individual needs of our students. Our vision is to provide students with a quality alternative education that maximizes their academic and personal success. Our mission is to care for, teach, and inspire all ACCESS students to discover their potential, develop their character, and maximize their learning so they may become successful contributors to society.

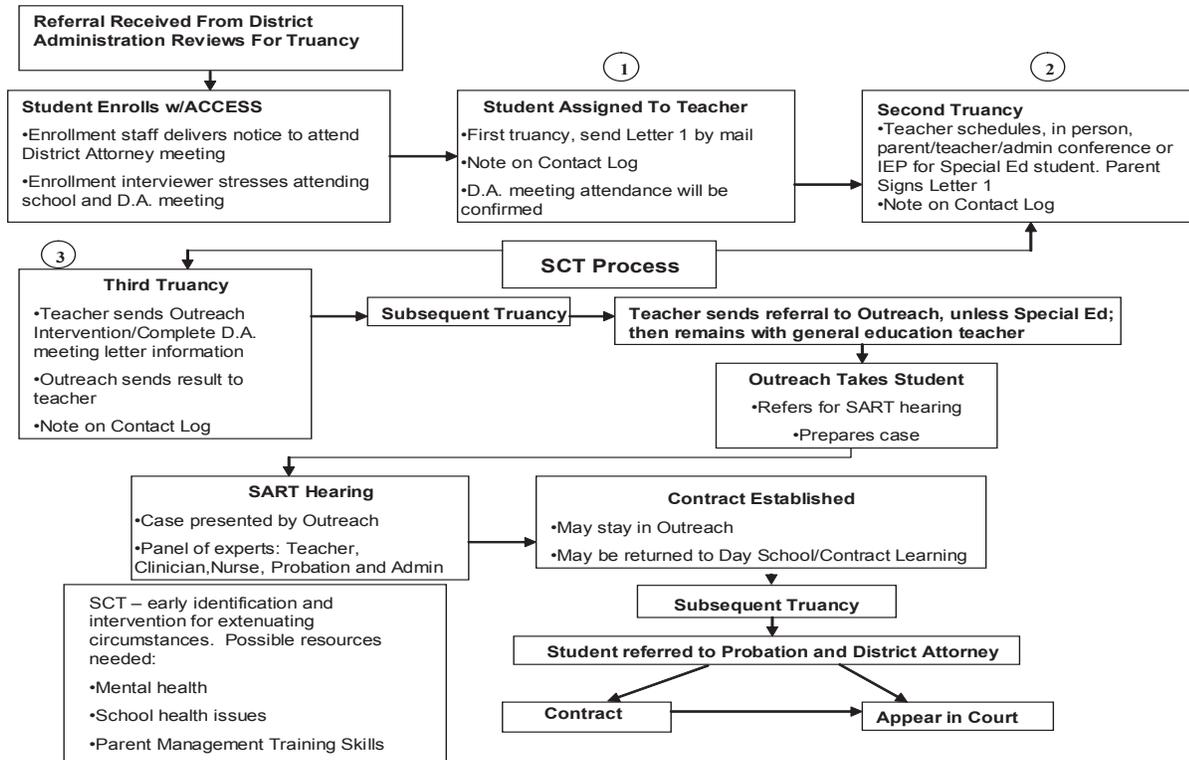
In order to accomplish our vision and mission, students need to attend school and become involved in their learning. The ACCESS program is partnering with multiple agencies to target chronically truant youths and their families in Orange County. The Truancy Response Project is the collaborative effort of the District Attorney's office, Juvenile Court, Probation, County Office of Education, School Districts, Social Services (SSA), Public Defender, Health Care Agency (HCA), and Parent Empowerment Program, (PEP). The program provides a progression of intervention actions up to and including formal court action, if necessary. It is a team approach to the truancy problem: School + DA + Probation + Court + SSA + HCA + PEP + Parent => School attendance => education for the child => law abiding productive citizen.

The Truancy Response Program is being utilized by the school districts in Orange County as well as ACCESS to decrease truancy and improve student attendance. Many of the students being referred to ACCESS come with a history of poor school attendance. The compo-

nents of the Truancy Program have been adapted to more effectively target the truancy challenge in ACCESS. The chart below indicates the steps followed in this adapted model. Students who have 3 or more unexcused absences are requested, along with his/her parent (s), to attend a District Attorney Parent meeting held at the school or a centralized meeting. The District Attorney explains the Education Code regarding school attendance and the consequences for continued unexcused absences. A School Attendance and Review Board (SARB) meeting is held for students with additional truantries. If there is a subsequent truancy after SARB, a petition is filed with Probation for investigation and monitoring unless the student is under 12 years of age. For students 12 years and under, the petition is sent to the District Attorney to process. If Probation is not successful in improving the student's school attendance, the case is sent to the District Attorney and a date is arranged in Truancy Court for the student and parent to attend.

Students enrolling in ACCESS with 3 or more prior truantries are scheduled to attend a DA parent meeting. Students who accrue three or more truantries are mailed a truancy notification letter. Any additional truancy results in a series of interventions including parent conference, continued parent communication, Student Consultation Team, SCT, meeting, Outreach team referral, School Attendance Review Team, SART, attendance contract, and petition filed with Probation. The focus of the interventions is not punitive, but seeks to discover the underlying issues which are causing the student to be truant. The role of the Outreach team is to re-engage the student in school. The Outreach teacher works individually with the

**Truancy Response Project**



student to improve his/her attendance and to complete his/her weekly assignments.

The data indicates impressive results for the first year of implementation in one administrative region. The ADA capture rate improved from 77% to 84%. The number of graduates also increased significantly.

A grant through Probation pays a large percentage of the District Attorney’s salary. The DA serves the 27 school districts as well as ACCESS. The challenge in expanding the program in ACCESS is the limited time the DA can allocate to serve the students in ACCESS. The results on the table below would not have

been achieved except through the partnership with the DA. The interventions on the chart below have been successful as a result of uncovering the issues underlying the truanancies. Another key element in increasing student attendance was the establishment of clear procedures for addressing truancy that was consistently implemented by staff in the region. Success in tackling the truancy problem requires a team approach.

Our analysis of this project is that a multi-agency approach combined with consistent communication with family, clearly identified interventions, along with a committed team of teachers will reduce truancy.

	2003-04	2006-07
Student enrollment	887	1,242
ADA	685	1,043
% of ADA captured	77%	84%
Number of Outreach Interventions	120	624
Number of HS graduates	145	244



# Forensic Science

## Desert Valley High School

### Brawley Union High School District—Imperial Valley

Desert Valley High School is located in the Imperial Valley which is in the southeastern corner of California. We are the alternative education school for the Brawley Union High School District. We are currently serving 173 students on our campus. The staff consists of 9 teachers, one full-time counselor, 2 Special Education aides, one part-time Tech Facilitator and a custodian that is assigned to this school. The student population is 94% Hispanic, 4% Caucasian and 2% African American. The student population reflects the comprehensive high school population.

Forensic Science is the application of science to law. Our forensic class is a one semester elective course in which students learn to apply concepts learned in previous science courses, television, movies and real life. They are exposed to crime scene investigation techniques and as a result the class has a strong emphasis on laboratory work, inquiry, and problem solving. Throughout the semester, students develop communication skills and work as a team to analyze and solve problems and exercises.

The Forensic Science class is constantly refined and updated due to acquiring more materials and developing more skills by the teacher. The class covers: Introduction and History of Forensic Science, statistics and probability, sketching crime scenes and collecting evidence, blood and its uses as a forensic tool including blood typing, DNA fingerprints and analysis of blood spatter patterns. Students also study prints of fingers, nose, lips, feet and tires from vehicles. Hair and fiber of various types are analyzed. Students will also study Forensic entomology, anthro-

pology and psychology. Students are also required to search out the various types of jobs available in this field and education requirement for entry level employment. The teacher is currently developing additional labs in crime scene reenactments, chromatography, glass fragments, tool marks, facial reconstruction and computer forensics.

Instruction consists of lectures, videos, labs, hands-on activities, simulations and CD-Rom programs. Students are graded on participation, assigned research papers, lab results, homework, portfolios, current events reports, long-term projects and tests.

Materials used in this class have been obtained using several funding sources including Title I, EIA, grants and trainings the teacher has attended. Materials are available from Ward's, Bio-Rad and other science suppliers. The teacher attended training during the summer of 2008 and was able to obtain additional training, equipment and supplies. The training was funded by the district to help improve this area of instruction.

The course currently fulfills the graduation requirements for a one semester of elective credits (5 credits are earned). We are currently in the process of preparing this class to be presented to the district curriculum committee for approval as UC accepted science class for A-G science credit. We are also working to expand the class to two semesters due to the breadth of skills incorporated within the curriculum.



# College Skills Program

## Palomar High School

### Sweetwater Union High School District—San Diego Co.

Palomar High School is a model continuation high school in the Sweetwater Union High School District, and has held that honor four consecutive years. Students are referred to Palomar from all of the secondary schools in the district. They are targeted when they are a minimum of 15 years of age and have fallen behind significantly in class credits. Chronic absenteeism is the main reason for the lack of completed credits. Most often, Palomar students arrive with low GPAs and gaps in their secondary education because of the amount of school they have missed. The school population is diverse with 83% Hispanic, 9% White, 3.6% African-American, 2.6% Filipino, and 1.8% other ethnic and cultural groups. Our students are from impoverished neighborhoods in our community, and many families are affected by immigration issues, high mobility, limited parental education, and a lack of resources. The mission statement of Palomar High School is to guarantee that all members of our richly diverse student population will graduate prepared to assume a meaningful role in our 21st century society.

The content of the Palomar High School college study skills program is a combination of high school and college skills. The class is team taught, with Southwestern College providing an instructor two days a week and the Palomar teachers providing instruction the other three days. The two Palomar teachers are also the senior class advisors, and have as much contact with the seniors as possible, allowing the teachers to advise and mentor all the students as they move through the pro-

gram. Study skills covered in the class include: note taking, organization, study skills, and writing for college. The course also assists students in writing scholarship essays and submitting numerous scholarship applications, requires a completed college application, and assists students in filling out their F.A.F.S.A. forms during class, and at parent outreach evenings. The class teaches students what it takes to be successful as college freshmen. Attendance is crucial for the success in



this program and for college credit. Students learn about the registration process, general education requirements, pre and co-requisites, certificate programs, degree programs, and transfer agreements. Teachers cover all of the different kinds of financial aid, and students complete applications for scholarships and federal aid. The class explores dif-

ferent career options, and looks at what is required to achieve those careers. Finally, the class visits campuses to take placement tests, tours, and eats lunch in the campus cafeteria so they can feel what it is like to be a college student. At the end of the program they are assigned a mentor at the high school, as well as one at the college to help them to register for classes and answer questions about college as they begin their freshman year.

Evidence indicates that this is a successful program. On a strictly financial basis, implementing this class has resulted in a much higher percentage of students applying for and receiving financial aid. In 2001, 6 students completed their F.A.F.S.A., in 2002, there were 12, 2003 and 2004 had 9 and 8 respec-

tively, and in 2005 there were 13. With implementation of the College Study Skills class in 2006, the number of applications jumped to over 50 completed applications, with 31 students receiving Cal Grants. 44 Cal Grants were awarded in 2007. Currently, our class of 2008 has 88 completed FAFSAs with 54 students using their grants at our local community colleges. When you consider that the average Cal Grant is worth \$1551, this alone is a huge benefit of the program. In the class of 2007, Palomar's graduates were awarded 55 scholarships with several students receiving 2 to 3 scholarships. Our 2008 class of 92 students were awarded 74 scholarships totaling over \$35,000.00 plus 2 Police Activity League scholarships that cover 100% of college costs and 1 MTS laptop winner.

More importantly, students who had never thought of themselves as college material at the beginning of class, found themselves filling out F.A.F.S.A.s and registering for college. At Southwestern College alone we have

50 enrolled students from our college study skills program of 2007-2008. The college study skills program is changing the culture in our school, and it is reflected in our ASAM report. Our graduation rate in 2004-2005 was 50.9% and it rose to 52.1% in 2005-2006. In 2006-2007, our graduation rate was 92.1%, and this figure significantly supports our ASAM goal of increasing our graduation rate. Our sustained daily attendance has increased to 79.7%. Our dropout rate is decreasing as well. According to the California Department of Education, in 2004-2005, our dropout rate was 15.7%. By 2007, our dropout rate was down to 5.7%. Each year the Sweetwater Union High School seniors complete a senior survey. When the class of 2008 was asked how well we prepare them for college, 76.78% of our seniors felt very prepared compared to the 57.67% overall district response average.



## Navy Internship Program

Palomar High School

Sweetwater Union High School District—San Diego Co.

Palomar High School is a continuation high school for at risk students. Palomar educates a culturally and ethnically diverse population, 83% of which are Hispanic, 9% White, 3.6% African-American, 2.6% Filipino and 1.8% other ethnic/cultural groups. Students are referred from their comprehensive high schools for a lack of academic progress and credit deficiency. The average student enters Palomar High School 1.5 years behind in credits.

Palomar offers students an opportunity to participate in the award winning Navy In-

ternship Program. The program was a receipt of the "Golden Bell" award for its excellence and achievement. The San Diego Chamber of Commerce recognized it as one of its "Best Practices" in San Diego County. In 2003 the program was recognized by the California Continuation Education Association as one of its "exemplary" programs.



The program is a partnership with local naval command and the educational community. Participating organizations are the Naval Southwest Regional Maintenance, Harborside Ele-

mentary School and Palomar High School. Harborside is a low income Title One school. Students who work at Harborside gain experience as tutors, classroom aides, or clerical office work. Students who work on the Naval base have opportunities to gain hands-on experience. Welding, life raft repair, valve and ship maintenance are a few of the shops offered. In all positions, students are mentored by motivated adults who are committed to providing students with personal as well as career support.

Approximately 150-200 students participate in this program each year. There are two sessions, one for students who attend school in the a.m. session, and one for students who attend the p.m. session. Two other local high schools participate however Palomar is the largest participant and acts as the overall coordinator. The semester program is offered in the fall and spring. Students who successfully complete the program earn 5 elective credits. Students also earn Letters of Commendation from the Principal and Certificates of Merit from the Navy. Students with outstanding attendance and citizenship also earn an Award of Distinction. It is not unusual for a student to repeat the program for additional experience and credit.

In the beginning of the program, students go through a three-week "Boot Camp" to learn social skills, teamwork, job expectations and skills that will help them succeed in the job market. Students and parents sign a commitment letter where they promise to follow the rules, regulations and traditions of the program. The program has strict attendance, discipline, and tardiness standards. Students also must be drug and alcohol free. Expecta-

tions and standards are high; therefore heavy attrition occurs during the Boot Camp portion of the program. Students who are dropped are encouraged to reapply the following semester.

Once "Boot Camp" is complete, students attend a job fair to select their jobs. Students then start their unpaid internships at the job of their choice. Students attend school full time and go to the Internship for four hours Monday through Thursday. On Fridays, students meet as a class and review their Internship and school performance for the week. To provide an opportunity for students to develop leadership skills, class officers are elected. These students are expected to be positive role models and to provide student-guidance for the program. Additionally, students learn how to prepare thank you and cover letters and are able to prepare a strong resume that includes their experiences in the program.

To date many students have gone on to college. We have had students graduate from SDCC, SWCC, USD, UCSD and UC Berkley. All students who have graduated from colleges have indicated the Navy Internship Program turned around their lives. The majority of the students indicate the Navy Program has a positive impact on students': social skills, attendance (approx. 94% attendance rate), ability to work hard and make the commitments important for success, acquisition of job skills and meeting requirements necessary for graduation.



# IF AT FIRST THEY DON'T SUCCEED: Leaders Create a Collaborative Partnership in Support of At-Risk Students

By Ted Price and Jane Doney

## Abstract:

According to recent statistics, the high school dropout rate is at an all-time high across the United States, with 30 percent of U.S. students likely to drop out of school prior to receiving their high school diploma. Orange County, California has not been immune to this crisis. In 2005-2006, statistics revealed that a little over four percent of the student population was considered dropouts; over 2,200 Orange County students dropped out. Statistics also show that where the high school dropout rate increases, crime escalates, poverty balloons, and communities suffer. It is a problem that will truly “take a village” to address and to correct.

Schools and district leaders have the ability to be proactive in changing a student’s future while there is still time. Through early identification and support via appropriate educational options, leaders establishing new programs can identify those students who are likely to disengage themselves from the educational system and offer alternative program placements as a way of providing much-needed intervention, until the student is ready to successfully return to his or her local school.

Orange County’s challenge is to reach students before they drop out. Current research from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) indicates that only 70% of U.S. students will graduate with a diploma (Center for Mental Health in Schools, 2007). And according to the Orange County Register, over 2,200 students in 2005-2006 were reported as dropouts in Orange County (Orange County Register, 2008). Students who do not finish high school may negatively impact not only their own lives, but life for all of us. Generally speaking, they have difficulty gaining productive employment and represent a burden to our tax and penal system (Habermehl, 2008). America’s Promise Alliance estimates that the federal government would reap \$45 billion in tax revenues now spent on welfare payments, public health services, and dealing

with crime, if half of the current 20-year-old high school dropouts had stayed in school (America’s Promise Alliance, 2008).

Another way of looking at the cost to society is the loss in lifetime earnings of \$4.9 billion for the estimated 19,000 – one in five – students in New Jersey who drop out of school annually, to say nothing of the \$258 million in annual health care and other social services costs. The costs are dramatic and grow exponentially when we fail (Corzine, 2008). To get a feel for how many students drop out of the system on a national basis, think about a young person somewhere dropping out of school every 26 seconds, 70,000 or more a year – before the end of the day, 3,000 more students will have dropped out (Powell, 2008). Research also shows that investing in education at all grade levels has a positive impact

on the economy (Carroll, 2008). According to the Coalition for Juvenile Justice, high school dropouts are three times more likely to be arrested (Coalition for Juvenile Justice, 2007). Another area negatively impacted is health care. The Alliance for Excellent Education reports that \$17 billion in health care could be saved if current dropouts had stayed in school and earned diplomas (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2008). Clearly, the impact of the dropout crisis reaches beyond the classroom and the school district.

Due to a significant decrease in enrollment and funding, local school districts are making decisions to retain at-risk students much longer than in years past before referring them to alternative programs. At the same time, the dropout rate is increasing and causing much concern among educators and the community as a whole. Decisions to keep at-risk students in a traditional school may adversely impact the opportunity for these students to achieve academic success, because they are not able or willing to work within a traditional, large-group classroom setting. This situation puts great pressure on each district to address the challenges of reaching this group of students in the areas of safety, drug patrols (Orange County Register, 20 March 2008), truancy, and the resulting negative impact on the student population as a whole. The job of educational leadership in the community is becoming more complex, funding is decreasing, and the challenge of meeting every student's needs is increasingly difficult.

Orange County Department of Education's (OCDE) WASC-accredited alternative education program for remediation, credit recovery, and academic/behavioral support, in collaboration with local districts, provides an alternative. The alternative education pro-

gram puts staffing, finances, and research into best practices to partner with districts to ensure that as many students as possible stay in school. This has resulted in decreased district dropout numbers and academically successful students being returned to their districts on track to graduate from their home districts.

The alternative education program's vision is to provide every student in an alternative setting with a world-class education that maximizes their academic and personal successes. If the students who are at risk are not provided an alternative solution, they are

**Decisions to keep at-risk students in a traditional school may adversely impact the opportunity for these students to achieve academic success, because they are not able or willing to work within a traditional, large-group classroom setting.**

much more likely to drop out and never return to school (Orange County Department of Education [OCDE], 2007). The impact of this on the student, the district, and the community as a whole requires us to consider the role of programs such as alternative education in helping districts rescue these students before it is too late. The OCDE alternative education separate-district model allows at-risk students to work in a small, individualized educational environment while making up credits and experiencing targeted support to help them make better personal and academic decisions. Small class

size and personal attention are important for reaching students. Studies show that after elementary school, where the day is usually spent with one teacher, students can become isolated as they move through middle and high school. "Schools get much bigger, and students move from one class to another. By high school, no one is talking to anyone," says Rhode Island State Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, Peter McWalters (Borg, 2008). Alternative education programs frequently provide a nurturing environment, a caring teacher, and personal attention, all designed to decrease feelings of isolation and improve stu-

dents' attitudes about school.

Alternative education students also benefit from a variety of services, including nutrition and health instruction, teen pregnancy programs, safe schools educational resources, and activities that positively impact students' views of themselves and their future. Many of these programs are not accessed by the at-risk population in traditional school settings. Additional services such as: California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) remediation, English Language Learner (ELL) support, and Special Education services also ensure that the student is supported in ways that will promote educational equity and academic achievement. All of the resources alternative education provides for its students are designed to support the overall mission of the program: "We care for, teach, and inspire all alternative education students to discover their potential, develop their character, and maximize their learning so they may become successful contributors to society" (Alternative Education Focus on Learning, 2004). At that point, former at-risk students are prepared to return to their home districts with specific knowledge and tools which will support an academically successful experience, the completion of graduation requirements, and a brighter future.

### **Who Are the Dropouts?**

When districts refer students to alternative education, dropout rates decrease substantially. Recognizing which students are likely to become dropouts is part of the solution. Researchers who have investigated characteristics associated with a high likelihood of dropping out say that it is possible to identify these students with 66% accuracy (Matthews, 2008). Common characteristics include:

- Absenteeism – missing 124 or more days (on average) in elementary school
- Reading at least two years below grade level in middle school
- Living in high-growth states

- Being a member of a low-income family
- Having low academic skills (though not necessarily low intelligence)
- Having parents who are not high school graduates
- Speaking English as a second language
- Being single-parent children
- Having negative self-perceptions; being bored or alienated; having low self-esteem; having gang affiliations
- Pursuing alternatives: males tend to seek paid work as an alternative; females may leave to have children or get married
- Having been previously retained in one or more grade levels
- Being a male from a minority group

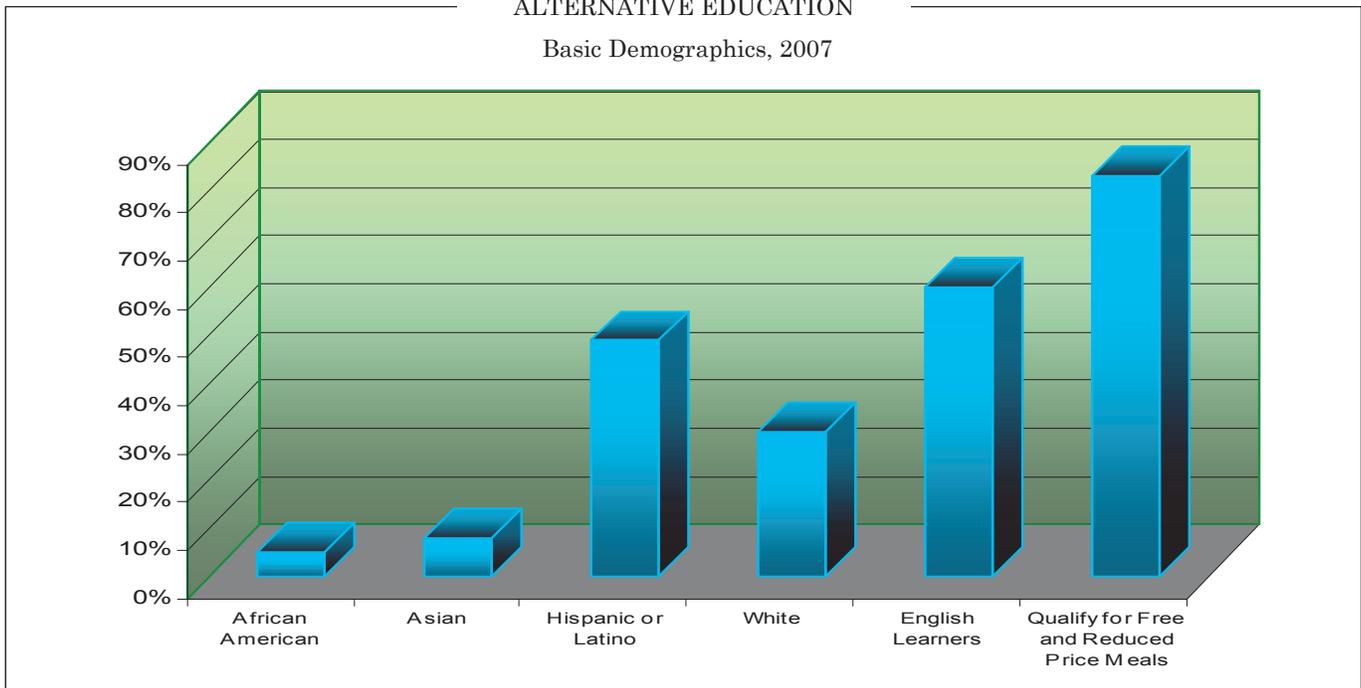
These characteristics align almost directly with the typical alternative education student. Because of its alternative approach, alternative education has the opportunity to focus its program on this specific type of student – with these specific characteristics and needs – without disenfranchising any other student groups found in most traditional schools. The unique nature of the alternative education program allows for staffing, staff development, finances, and decision-making to be driven by what this specific group of students needs in order to achieve success and return to their home districts with a new attitude about themselves as learners. Currently, approximately one-quarter of all alternative education students return to their home district with academic credits earned, high school graduation requirements met, renewed focus, and improved behavior.

### **Who Are the Alternative Education Students?**

Alternative education students are best described as students who are not able or willing to experience academic and personal experience in a traditional educational environment for a variety of reasons. Their lack of motivation or high level of distraction is not the

## ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

Basic Demographics, 2007



fault of their school – it is simply a disconnect that the students feel with the traditional system. When at-risk student are referred to alternative education, many of the characteristics or challenges in their lives that create this disconnect can be addressed. Alternative education Safe Schools staff (OCDE, 2007) has identified the traits and patterns most common among alternative education students:

- ✦ 71% live in high-crime neighborhoods; 83% qualify for free or reduced lunch
- ✦ Many students are foster youth, victims of abuse, living in group homes, emancipated minors, and/or (un)diagnosed with mental illness
- ✦ Many students are transient, homeless or on the brink of homelessness, needing to work to support the family, and/or struggling to discover own identity
- ✦ Many students struggle with addictions (e.g., drugs, alcohol) or eating disorders
- ✦ 91% have changed addresses one or more times during the school year
- ✦ Students who feel disconnected to the traditional school system and need to be re-engaged via an alternative model
- ✦ Over 60% of alternative education students are identified as English Learners
- ✦ Students with severe attendance/truancy

issues

- ✦ Students who have been expelled from their previous school

Students who are delinquent in their academic credits and basic skills

Recognizing these challenges allows alternative education to create and sustain a program that collaborates with districts and community resources to help students move past the obstacles that are getting in the way of their academic success and personal growth.

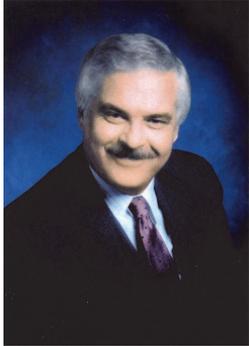
### What Are the Characteristics of Successful Alternative Programs?

Nationally, the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) identified 84 studies of 22 dropout prevention interventions, which are school- and community-based initiatives that aim to keep students in school and encourage them to complete their high school education. The review focuses on three outcome domains: staying in school, progressing in school, and completing school. As of September 2008, WWC identified the four interventions that had the most positive or potentially positive effects in two out of the three domains: Accelerated middle schools; Achievement for Latinos through

*continued on page 38*

# John Peshkoff Award

Congratulations to the 2009 award recipients



John Peshkoff (1935-2006) was one of the founding fathers of JCCASAC (then known as Juvenile Court School Administrators of California or JCSAC). John served as the JCCASAC president from 1977-78 and again from 1990-91. He advocated for legislation and practices which support quality educational services for students in alternative education programs. He also served as a mentor, friend, and cheerleader to his peers and colleagues in the field.

The John Peshkoff Award is presented annually for memorable vision, service, leadership and commitment to JCCASAC students and programs.



**Ken Taylor**  
JCCASAC President  
1996-1997

**Ken Taylor**, Ed.D. is currently the Division Administrator for Student Services for Kern County. In 1972, he was hired to be a court school teacher—that was five years before Juvenile Court Schools were created in CA Ed. Code (1977). He has always held with his belief that if a person wants to be a teacher and change

lives, JCCS teachers is the best job in the world. Ken has 37 years as a teacher/administrator for JCCS programs run by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office. He was JCCASAC's president in 1996-97 and is an active member and past chair for SPSSC (Student Program Services and Steering Committee). He has participated as a member of committees working on alternative education issues including SB 1095 High Risk Youth Programs, AB 544 Charter School Regulations, ASAM Technical Committee, and Charter School Special Ed. Regulations. He has also been the SPSSC Representative to the Legislative Committee and Board of Directors of CCESSA and on the Revision Committee for Title 15 Regulations (State Board of Corrections).

Ken currently lives in Bakersfield with his wife of 37 years. He has a 29 year old son, 26 year old daughter, 2 year old grandson and 5 month old granddaughter. We thank him for his unyielding advocacy and dedication to providing quality educational services to students in juvenile court and community school programs.



**Bill Burns**  
JCCASAC President  
1989-1990

### A Couple of Paragraphs about My Life:

Is there life after JCCASAC? You bet there is. For the past eleven years (Has it been that long?), after retiring as Administrator of Court and Community Schools in San Mateo County, I have been incredibly busy with family, travel, babysitting, and of course, work.

I am an instructor in the county jail in Redwood City three to four days each week teaching reading, poetry writing, and parenting skills to the male inmates housed in The Maguire Correctional Facility. I work for Redwood City Library's Project READ

helping inmates improve their reading skills so that they can become better fathers, learn how to read children's books to their kids, and possibly passing the GED Tests while incarcerated.

In addition, I continue to work as a Tour Guide at SF Giants' AT&T Park in San Francisco giving behind the scenes tours of the clubhouse, dugout, luxury suites, underground batting cages, press boxes, and so forth. I also teach classes at SF State University on some 12 to 15 weekends each year where I help teachers prepare for taking the CBEST and CSET Tests.

I miss all the wonderful relationships I've over the years with the Court and Community School family of California. But I'm still able to stay in fairly close contact with people like Chuck Lee, Paula Mitchell, Michael Watkins, and Bob Michels who were quite helpful in steering me through the troubled waters of program administration. I really don't miss the students as many of them show up in what I call my "post graduate studies" classes in the Maguire Jail. When we meet again in jail classes they often say, "Hey...you were my teacher in the hall...or in Camp Glenwood!" Instead of reminding them that I was the principal ... as we smile together in recognition, I gently admonish them that, "I mustn't have been that great of a teacher, since it looks like you didn't learn much of what I was trying to teach you."

I am still quite proud of having been privileged to have been a member of JCCASAC, and to have served on your Executive Board. I don't think there is a more significant or effective organization in the entire educational system. Keep up the great work for the so needy and neglected kids of California.



# CALL FOR PAPERS

## The Journal of Juvenile Court, Community and Alternative School Administrators of California



### Criteria:

- Combines both research-based management instructional theory with field practice
- Is written with court school administrators in mind as the audience
- Is written in clear, straight forward prose
- Acronyms are spelled out the first time they are used
- Is result, not proposal, or oriented.

### Format:

- Recognizes other educators' cited work through either bibliography or footnote referencing
- Uses American Psychological Association publication guidelines
- Articles are four to twelve pages, double-spaced, in length
- "Student Success" and Innovation Program" contributions are one-half of two pages in length
- Includes short biographical sketch of twenty-five words or less about the author
- Displays data, if any, in tables or figures
- May include photos or original student artwork, if appropriate and available.

### Do's:

- Use the active voice (e.g., results showed, the study found, students report)
- Use the third person when possible; some use of first person is acceptable
- If first person is used, relate to reader's experience
- Give credit, use footnotes and reference list
- If it is previously printed, include permission to reprint or source so we can obtain permission.

### Don'ts:

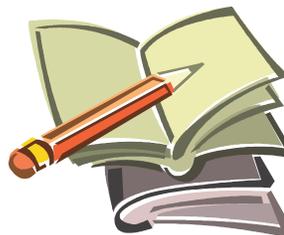
- Use the passive voice excessively (e.g., It was found it's been reported)
- Use 100 words when 20 will do.

Welcomes original articles, research papers and student success stories related to the:

- *purposes*
- *goals*
- *programs*
- *practices*
- *instruction and*
- *management*

of juvenile court, community, and alternative schools.

**Papers to be considered for the Spring 2009 issue should be submitted by**  
**March 19, 2010**



### Please Contact:

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*Congratulations*  
*to the County Office Alternative Education*  
*2008-2009*  
*Teachers of the Year*



**Phil Krotz**  
 Santa Cruz  
 County Office of Education

**Phil Krotz** has been teaching for over thirty years. After four years as a Special Education teacher in Ohio and Connecticut, He moved to California and began working for the Santa Cruz COE. He has been a Court and Community School teacher ever since. Phil began his Alternative Education career at Dewitt Anderson, a court school for girls. After 13

years, he took up the challenge of teaching at the Redwoods Program, a drug and alcohol rehabilitation and family reunification center connected to the Juvenile Hall. When funding cuts caused the Redwoods Program to close, Phil found himself full-circle teaching again at Dewitt-Anderson. He will retire this year, having served thousands of students.

Phil has spent his thirty years as a teacher, engaging students through hands-on, experiential methods, emphasizing habits of mind and habits for success in a cross-curricular format. Phil is an environmentalist and an artist. He uses his interests to engage his students in standards-based, cooperative projects that involve reading, writing, mathematics, science, and art. Recent projects have included native salmon and trout restoration, and a community garden.

In addition to facilitating student learning through discovery, Phil believes that students must learn the soft skills, such as responsibility to self and to others that will prepare them for the world beyond high school. Just the other day, a former graduate came by to visit with Phil after school. During their conversation she remarked to him, "When I first met you, I hated you. But you know what I found out? All those things you told us about being on time, following directions, and doing your best work...you were right!"

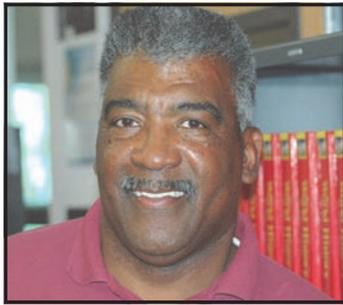


**Daniel Watts**  
 Sacramento  
 County Office of Education

**Daniel Watts** is a teacher with Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE). Born in Biloxi, Mississippi on an Air Force base where his father was an aviation electronics teacher and mother a teacher of juvenile and adult offenders, Daniel feels teaching is part of his DNA. He teaches graphic arts at Carson Creek Jr./Sr. High School at the Sacramento County Boys Ranch juvenile facility.

"At-risk youth still have a lot to offer the world and their communities," Watts said. "Too many of our youth are falling through the cracks and I see the Boys Ranch as their last hope of turning their life around. I have a very important job that I take seriously and I want to show my students that learning new things can be exciting and there still is hope for them."

In his classes, Watts holds a weekly art contest where students compete for prizes. The contest teaches students how to work together successfully. He also developed a student teaching assistant program allowing students to earn the right to assist in the classroom, while learning leadership skills and responsibility. Watts developed an entrepreneur program with his class that provides graphic arts design services to SCOE staff and the public. The program and its students have created designed logos for several SCOE campuses and projects. "Daniel really cares for the students and they respond positively to that. He's teaching them something that allows them to express their creativity, yet has a real world application. His class always has a waiting list because it's so popular among the students," said Tim Collins, Chief Deputy for the SAC County Probation Department.



**Derrick Anderson**  
San Bernardino  
County Superintendent of Schools

2002, after a lengthy career in non-public education as a teacher and administrator.

**Derrick Anderson** is the lead teacher at Bob Murphy County Community Day School in Rialto operated by the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools. Derrick has a passion for alternative education students and is committed to making a difference in their lives. Derrick joined the staff at Bob Murphy in



**Woody Moynahan**  
Santa Clara  
County Office of Education

1985, he started the E. E. Community School which was later renamed Calero Community School. While there he arranged a program that enrolls students into the local Occupational Center and community colleges. During his time at Calero he became a school counselor with multiple school site assignments. This is a position he still holds today.

Woody has served on a variety of ASD committees and represented the COE on the Juvenile Hall Advisory Board for three years. Throughout his career with the COE, he has also been active in CTA. He has served the Association of County Teachers in many different capacities. He is also a CTA State Council member and serves on the CTA's Liaison Committee to the California State Department of Education Advisory Board for Special Education.

Woody has fond memories of all his time in ASD, especially helping many students graduate from high school. When he runs into former students, it is always nice to hear their success stories.

**Woody Moynahan** began his teaching career with the Santa Clara County Office of Education in September, 1970 at the Harold Holden Ranch for Boys. While there, he was instrumental in establishing the Ranch Athletic League. In addition, his students participated in wrestling, cross country and track and field with the local high schools.

His twelve years at Holden were followed by three years at the Muriel Wright Center. In



**Yolanda Collier**  
San Diego County Office of Education

Glover. "She just has an incredible way about her." Collier's students, 13-18 years of age, have been arrested for gang violence, prostitution and drugs, among other things. "Yolanda restores the drive and aspirations of the young ladies she teachers," said her supervisor, JCCS Mesa Region Principal Ron Major. "She gives them pride, dignity and a sense of well being. She teaches them that their situation is just a small point of time, and they can still reach their dreams and aspirations."

**Yolanda Collier** is a teacher with San Diego County Office of Education at the JCCS Girls' Rehabilitation Facility (GRF). After growing up in Philadelphia, she came west to attend SDSU and began teaching 10 years ago. "I've seen her in the classroom and she's magic," said JCCS Senior Director Mary



**Vicki Trask**  
Stanislaus  
County Office of Education

sector to an instructor and mentor at the community college and high school level. Her energy and dedication to students is motivated and driven by her own life experience.

Vicki grew up living in foster homes, juvenile halls and on the streets. While in high school a teacher took interest in Vicki and went out of her way to help her. This teacher inspired Vicki to begin her journey into education as a personal passion and career. She began her career as a community college instructor and she earned her Bachelor's degree at the age of 43. She now has one Masters Degree and is in the process of earning her second.

Vicki has chosen to take the lessons she has learned and use her "life experiences" to help students make better choices. In addition to her full time ROP teaching position in Juvenile Hall, she has developed Project Success, an after school program for at-risk students, designed to prepare youth for meaningful employment and further educational opportunities.

Academic Success; career academies; and Check & Connect (Dropout Prevention, 2008).

Researchers who identify characteristics of students at risk for dropping out have also identified the characteristics of successful alternative educational programs which are shown to be effective in reaching at-risk students (Steinberg & Almeida, 2008). The common characteristics include:

- Low teacher/student ratio
- Clearly stated mission and discipline code
- Caring faculty with continual staff development
- School staff having high expectations for student achievement
- Learning program specific to the student's expectations and learning style
- Flexible school schedule with community involvement and support
- Total commitment to each student's success

These characteristics align with the alternative education model (ACCESS Focus on Learning, 2004). The small class sizes, individualized instruction, trained staff, and flexible program options allow the alternative education program to meet the needs of at-risk students and help them change past behaviors that interfered with their personal and academic success. Additionally, alternative education's extra curricular activities and after school programs support student learning and lead to academic success. One study from the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning reported that students who received "a social component to their learning scored 11 percent higher on standardized tests than students who weren't exposed to this kind of activity" (Borg, 2008). By providing purposeful and targeted activi-

ties during and after school, alternative education is engaging the whole student and providing experience and meaning to make learning relevant and academic achievement attainable. The single focus on at-risk students allows alternative education to serve as a valuable resource and support for district goals of academic achievement and equity for all.

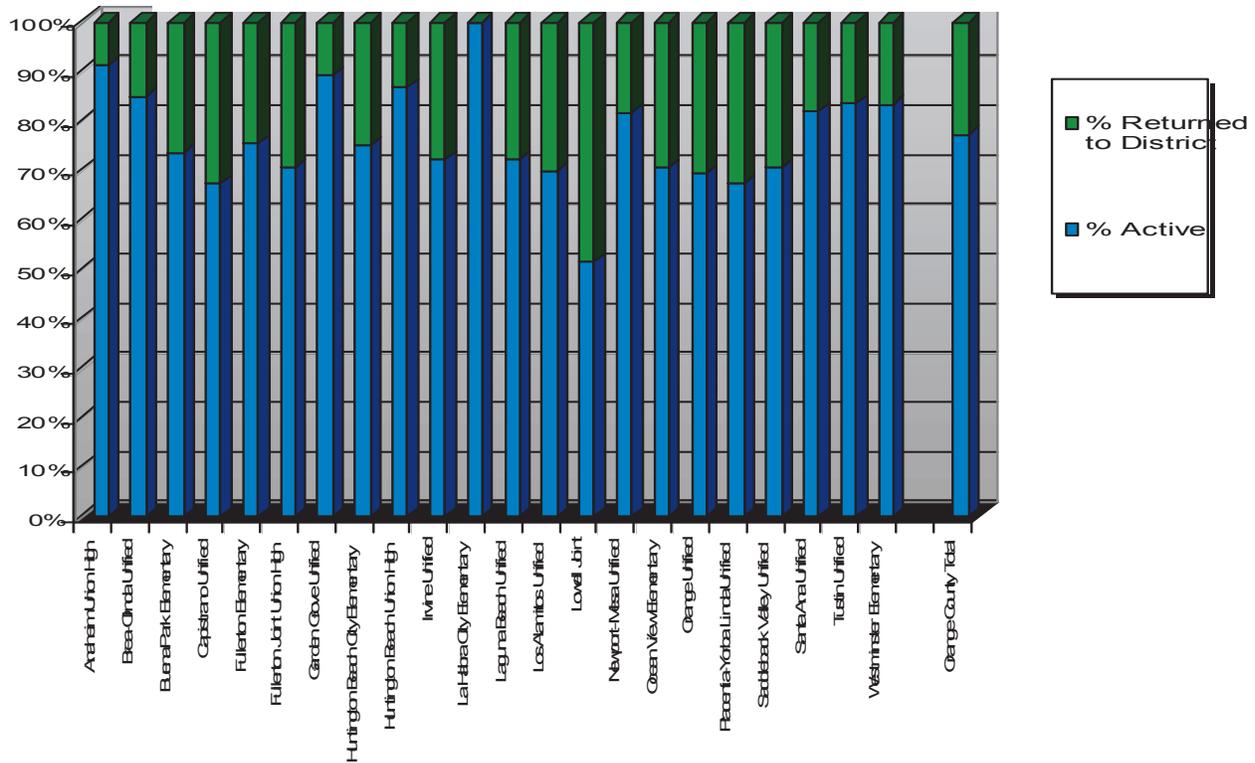
### **How Does an Alternative Education Program Support Local Districts?**

Students who are referred to alternative education often return to their home district with many new positive attributes in place. Some of the ways alternative education supports both students and districts can be seen in the goals students meet and the services alternative education provides. For example, students:

- Earn over 23 academic credits (on average) while at alternative education (ACCESS Attendance and Records, 2007)
- Receive Special Education services, when appropriate (ACCESS Special Education, 2007)
- Fulfill the Algebra I graduation requirement while at alternative education (ACCESS Attendance and Records, 2007)
- Benefit from academic and vocational assessments which provide teachers and students with information for the purpose of setting long- and short-term goals (ACCESS Focus on Learning, 2004)
- Receive CAHSEE remediation: All 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders who have not successfully passed both sections of the CAHSEE have the opportunity for remediation via individual/small group tutoring, online adaptive programs, and additional instructional materials. (ACCESS Assessment Center, 2008)

By providing purposeful and targeted activities during and after school, alternative education is engaging the whole student and providing experience and meaning to make learning relevant and academic achievement attainable.

Percent of Students Returned to District- 2006-2007  
(ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION Attendance and Records, 2007)



- Pass one or both sections of the CAHSEE while at alternative education (ACCESS Assessment Center, 2008)
- Receive appropriate and targeted support when identified as an English Learner (EL). EL students make up 60% of the alternative education population. (ACCESS Attendance and Records, 2007). As a result, they receive the full advantage of Title III funds and reap the benefits of “best practices” for EL students, which include:
  - small group settings
  - opportunity to work with one teacher
  - appropriate instructional goals and materials
  - teachers trained in research-based instructional strategies, including Guided Language Acquisition and Development (Project GLAD)

Alternative education also benefits the districts served through the following specialized programs that provide unique, specific benefits:

**Health and Nutrition Program:** Recognizing that health and nutrition are important foundations for increasing academic achievement, the alternative education Network for a Healthy California has a full curriculum for students in this area. Trained staff travel from site to site, teaching the importance of health and nutrition and providing cooking demonstrations and health-related community resource information to alternative education students (ACCESS Network for a Healthy California, 2007).

**Middle School Programs:** Alternative education makes day school placement a priority for middle school students (ACCESS Attendance and Records, 2008). These students are in need of academic and behavioral support and remediation, and they need a teacher who understands where they are and where they may be headed, if behaviors do not change and parents are not involved. Teachers work with students to teach basic foundation concepts in reading, writing, and math, while helping students identify those things that may get in the

The current trend in traditional schools to hold on to failing and disruptive students far too long is damaging to all stakeholders and makes the job of alternative education even more difficult. When traditional school districts partner with programs such as alternative education to help students before their problems become seemingly insurmountable, everyone benefits.

way of future success in school. They also work diligently to connect with parents to emphasize their role in the success of their student. The one-on-one relationship the student and parents have with their alternative education teacher ensures that all students stay “on the radar” and receive the personal level of help and instruction they need (ACCESS Focus on Learning, 2007).

**Outreach:** Alternative education has Outreach sites throughout the county whose goal is to find students who have fallen between the cracks. Their targeted and alternative approach to connecting with students and adapting to their current situations has increased the number of students who have stayed in school and provided support at a crucial crossroad in the lives of these students.

**Truancy Reduction Program:** Alternative education Program Administrative Regions (PARs) have created collaborative partnerships with alternative education administrators and teachers, local school districts, community agencies and the District Attorney’s office in order to reach students who would otherwise fall between the cracks and become a dropout statistic. This partnership has been extremely effective in bringing the issue of truancy to the attention of all stakeholders and using the resources of each to address the challenge. Alternative education teachers in the program travel throughout the county to find students who are truant; they build a relationship with them, while getting them back on track, academically. Parents and students are educated in school attendance requirements and laws, and community resource information is shared. Levels of truancy inter-

ventions are used, from face-to-face meetings or phone calls to Student Attendance and Review Team (SART) and/or court hearings, when necessary. While the problem of truancy is large, the alternative education program is proactively working with this program to reach, re-engage, and re-connect students and families to the educational system (Blackburn, 2008; Puszert, 2008).

**Safe Schools and Support Services:** The mission of Safe Schools and Support Services is to enhance the academic learning experience of students attending alternative education school sites by building a safety-net of support (ACCESS Safe Schools, 2007). These programs develop students socially, emotionally, and academically. In order to fulfill this mission, Safe Schools provides a variety of exemplary life-changing experiences, services, and programs. Among these programs are:

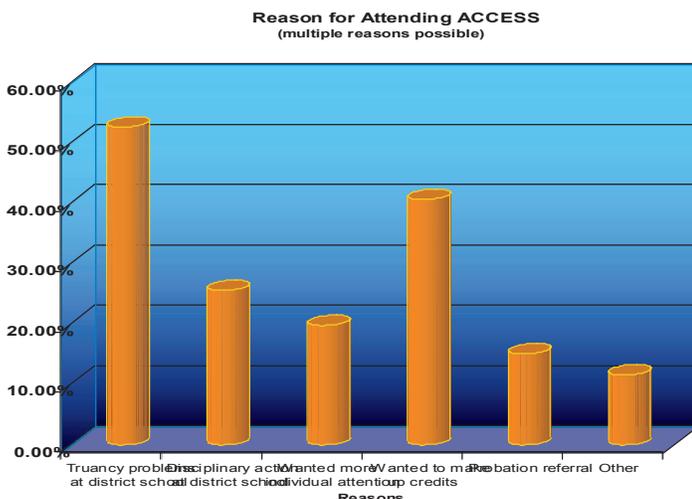
- Health education / teen pregnancy prevention
- After school programs
- Youth camps and conferences
- Summer at The Center (performing arts program)
- Service learning programs
- Individual/family/group therapy
- Higher education/career counseling and transition services
- Crisis response and gang prevention programs
- Sports programs
- Visual arts
- Parent education and training
- Early childhood development for teen parents
- World of Work Career/Education Job Fair

- Drug and alcohol prevention education
- Life skills groups

Alternative education believes that at-risk students require specific, targeted support in order to help them overcome past obstacles and achieve the success necessary to become positive, contributing members of society (ACCESS Focus on Learning, 2004). The current trend in traditional schools to hold on to failing and disruptive students far too long is damaging to all stakeholders and makes the job of alternative education even more difficult. When traditional school districts partner with programs such as alternative education to help students before their problems become seemingly insurmountable, everyone benefits.

### ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION Student Survey Findings

The alternative education Student Survey provides valuable insight into the needs, perceptions, and thoughts of alternative education students. Each year, students complete this survey so that alternative education leadership and staff are able to reflect upon best practices, continue to support programs and philosophies which are making a positive impact on students, and strengthen the overall program with the students and their needs as the central focus. Year after year, the survey demonstrates the strengths of the alternative education program, as seen through the eyes of the students. Results



from the 2007 alternative education Student Survey included:

- Strong personal relationships with a caring, professional, highly-qualified teacher
- Opportunities for extra curricular activities
- Benefits of support services and counseling
- Academic support and individualized attention
- Opportunity to make up credits at an appropriate pace
- Feeling understood and cared for by the staff

Many students indicate that this is the first time they have felt this way about a school, a teacher, and their academic program as a whole, and as a result, met some important goals. The results of these student surveys serve as a reminder that each student is unique and that one size does not fit all. The alternative education model is a very specific program for a specific type of student. Districts who utilize the alternative education opportunity for their students reap the benefits when their students return “home” with credits made up, better overall habits, improved attendance, and a more positive attitude. Alternative education can make that difference (ACCESS Student Survey, 2007).

### Conclusion:

By its very design, alternative education exists as a partner to Orange County school districts (ACCESS Focus on Learning, 2004). When students are referred to alternative education, they are “on loan” to a program whose sole purpose is to remediate and support students who might otherwise drop out. If referred in time, the alternative education model is highly effective at helping students in a variety of ways— academically, personally, and socially – so that the students are able to return to district with a new attitude, improved attendance and academics, and on track for graduation (ACCESS Student Survey, 2007). However, when students are referred “late,” the task is more challenging and the stakes that much greater. Districts need to weigh the cost of keeping at-risk students in a traditional set-

When students are referred to alternative education, they are “on loan” to a program whose sole purpose is to remediate and support students who might otherwise drop out.

ting too long and the outcome associated with sending them to alternative education at a point when academic remediation is still possible and student motivation can still be improved. Students need and deserve a chance to experience success, and referring students to alternative education in a timely manner allows them to work within a program specifically designed to help them succeed and make positive changes.

Districts that recognize the partnership role of alternative education have the opportunity to support their overall goals and build their own programs, while their at-risk students are being cared for by a program designed specifically for them. When districts utilize alternative education as a safe haven for students who demonstrate at-risk characteristics, they are putting the needs of all students first. By using alternative education in this manner, money, time, and focus previously spent on attempting to solve problems related to the at-risk students would be available for the majority of students who are very successful in a traditional school setting. Instead of:

- Loss of ADA due to truancy and the cost of truant officers

- Cost of implementing programs such as drug patrols
- Increase in school disruptions and violence
- Low staff morale due to challenges in the classroom and on the campus

By the utilizing the alternative education “opportunity,” districts can:

- Increase support for traditional students who may choose to leave schools if their needs are not seen as a priority by the school or district
- Increase test scores via traditional methods
- Provide a more positive culture and climate at the schools, conducive to student learning and high staff morale
- Lower drop out rates

The alternative education program exists to support districts in helping all students achieve. Educational equity is not found in “one size fits all” but in finding the size that best fits students’ needs. A partnership with alternative education is a proven way to provide true academic equity, while supporting students, schools, districts, and the community.

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*About these authors:*

**Ted Price, Ph.D.**, is presently affiliated with West Virginia University, serving as an assistant professor of educational leadership. Prior to his move to the East coast, he served fourteen years as the Assistant Superintendent of Alternative, Community, and Correctional Education Schools and Services (ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION) for the Orange County (California) Department of Education (OCDE), where he was responsible for programs and services for at-risk, delinquent, incarcerated, and home-schooled youth and adults.

Dr. Price has served as Chair of the Student Programs and Services Steering Committee of the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association, President of LeARN, Consultant for 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 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 thirty years, during which time he has conducted numerous seminars throughout the United States. He is a published author, teacher, and leader in his field.

**Jane Doney** is the Assistant Principal of Assessment for the Orange County Department of Education's (OCDE) Alternative, Community, and Correctional Schools and Services (ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION) program. She spent over 17 years as a classroom teacher, before becoming the assistant principal for OCDE's Community Home Education Program (CHEP). Jane's current role in assessment has allowed her to combine her passion for students, love of collaborating with teachers and administrators, and desire to find solutions to the many challenges educators face each day.

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# Working Together To Create Better Programs: Rancho Cielo Community School

## Monterey County Office of Education



In December of 2008, Rancho Cielo Community School of Monterey County Office of Education (MCOE) received two prestigious awards, a California School Board Association (CSBA) Golden Bell and the Cities, Counties and Schools (CCS) Partnership Award "*Recognizing excellence in building communities through collaboration*". These awards validate that successful collaboration and partnerships create better programs and opportunities for students.

Rancho Cielo Youth Campus, the brain-child of retired Superior Court Judge John Phillips, opened in 2000 to develop services to benefit "at-risk" youth. With collaboration from Monterey County Probation Department, MCOE, and community based partnerships Rancho Cielo Community School began on 100-acre ranch in East Salinas. This triad supports Monterey County youth success.

The first leg in the triad, Monterey County Probation Department, provide for the supervision of students. This begins when each student is picked up from their home and delivered to Rancho Cielo until the students return home. Probation also provides breakfasts and lunches. The second leg, Monterey County Office Education, focuses on teaching academic and pro-social behaviors and skills in a supportive school environment. The third leg, community based partnerships, complete the triad. Each year, new partnerships form to strengthen instructional supports for students and maximize resources and services. Turning Point of Central California offers job training, Monterey County Behavior Health offer counseling, First Tee of Monterey County Golf Program gives golf lessons, and Gaits of Hope therapeutic horse program provide horsemanship lessons.

These are just a few partnerships that offer services to Rancho Cielo students.

The Golden Bell Awards program promotes excellence in education. The criterion for selection includes demonstration that the program has made a difference for students and is innovative or exemplary. Students at Rancho Cielo Community School have shown significant academic growth and demonstrate positive behavioral changes in and out of the classroom. A computer-based assessment tool, STAR Reading, provides reading levels of students in order to measure their growth in reading ability. The average gain in reading ability for a student who has attended school for at least 90 continuous days (1/2 a

year) is 1.3 (one year, three months). Students have also increased their overall GPAs and increase credits earned towards high school graduation. Rancho Cielo is part of the Salinas Community School CDS code. The 2008 Academic Performance Index (API) Report shows a gain of 79 points. Other successes include 25 students out of 60, or 42% of students enrolled in the 2007-2008 Turning Point program, learned job skills necessary for students to acquire a job upon their return to their communities.

Monterey County Probation Department reported that during the 2006-2007 year, there was a 57% decrease in arrests of students after 6 months in the program in contrast to the comparison group which showed a 2% increase in arrests during the same period. After one year of entering the program, students showed an 83% reduction in new offenses. During the same time period, incarcerations decreased 67%.

The second award Rancho Cielo received is the CCS Partnership Award. Rancho Cielo was the only school to receive this prestigious award which



recognizes exemplary collaboration and pooling of a community's resources in order to maintain healthy and vibrant communities. CCS is the only state-level collaboration of professional association of local government in the nation which focuses on preserving communities. Congratulations Monterey County of Education!

**About the author:**

Nancy Lloyd is a principal for Monterey County Office of Education Alternative Education Programs. She has an MS in Educational Leadership from Cal State Hayward.



Standing (left to right). Scott Plotkin, Executive Director of the California School Boards Association; Judge (Retired) John Phillips, Rancho Cielo; Patti Esparza, Monterey County Probation Department; Nancy Lloyd, Community School Principal for the Monterey County Office of Education, Gary Vincent, Director the Alternative Education Programs for the Monterey County Office of Education; Dr. Nancy Kotowski, Monterey County Superintendent of Schools



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# Education is Power. Step Your Game up!

by Linda Mitchell  
Sacramento County Office of Education

Let me tell you about a school.

In April, the students at Carson Creek Jr./Sr. High School took home the perpetual trophy by winning first place in the first ever Sacramento County Academic Bowl. The topic was "Science of the Human Body." (The winning question: *What is the purpose of the myelin sheath?*)

In February, students competed at the Regional level in the Poetry OutLoud national competition. (Reciting "*I, Too*" by Langston Hughes, our student captured the audience after reciting the first line.)

In December, students wrote and entered original Blues lyrics in the Sacramento *Blues In The Schools* competition. (*Gotta Find My Way Back* was the title of the school level winning lyrics.)

In November, students created artwork and participated in a regional art show.

During April and May, students compete in a regional intramural basketball league. (Last year they choked in the finals and came in second place!)

In May students compete in a regional Spelling Bee.

The student council meets weekly. "Education is power. Step your game up!", the school slogan drafted by the Carson Creek Student Council, delivers the message of direction and opportunity for self-leadership in a student's future and challenges each student to set a new course. The Student Council has an active

role as members of the School Site Council. Their feedback and questions are always the most poignant and direct.

These extra-curricular activities give students the feel of a regular high school, however most of the students would have been excluded from participating at their home high school. The orange jumpsuits and the 18-foot razor wire fence give it away. When the public sees our very mature and well-behaved students in regional activities, they are asked, "Where is Carson Creek High School?" Carson Creek Jr./Sr. High School is located at the Sacramento County Boys Ranch and provides a disposition option for Juvenile Court. The facility is a secure 125-bed, 24-hour commitment facility designed for older, more sophisticated male wards with a history of serious or extensive delinquent behavior. The facility is located twenty miles southeast of Sacramento in a rural setting in the foothills.

In December 2008, the school won a Golden Bell award from CSBA (California School Boards Association) for its career-technical education program. In March 2009 the school received national recognition from RAPSAs (Reaching At-Promise Students Association), selected as the recipient of the Best Practices



Award for educational associations or school districts working with at-promise students.

Something special is going on there. The changes for students at Carson Creek Jr./Sr. High School have been dramatic over the last 3 years. Primary changes are the integration of Career Technical Education, the use of data to inform instruction, building transition plans, and the resulting change in school culture.

The integration of Career Technical Education has significantly altered student learning in all academic areas as well as helping to build successful transitions. Integrating career-technical education and academics accomplishes two things:

1. It answers the question from students, "Why do I need to learn this?" It's hard to justify to students why they should work on math problems 1 - 30 on page 9 in a text book but obvious why they need to calculate circumference, area, etc. of the garden they are fencing, or the wall they are designing. Students of "vacademics" learn concepts in context. The classes are of higher interest and students achieve more.

2. It requires the formation of effective, synergistic partnerships with agencies, community-based organizations, Probation, employers, post-secondary schools and colleges, and apprenticeships which become the backbone of the program and build transitional opportunities for students. The school houses the first nationally registered apprenticeship program at a juvenile court school, an accomplishment made possible by partnering with other agencies.

The school houses the first nationally registered apprenticeship program at a juvenile court school, an accomplishment made possible by partnering with other agencies.

When integrating academics and career-technical education, two strategies are vital. Career-technical education classes must be built into and throughout the master schedule so they are accessible to all students. The second strategy teams academic teachers and career-technical teachers, give them planning time together to develop lessons and student projects that incorporate both academic and career-technical standards and skills into both classes. Two ROP courses - Manufacturing Technology: Metals and Construction Technology – can lead to apprenticeship. Computer Graphics, Nursery/Landscaping, and Building Maintenance/Repair are additional ROP classes taught at Carson Creek.

A site Transition Team, composed of school staff, Sacramento County Probation staff, and Sacramento County Mental Health staff has designed a "Passport for Success". This is a transition plan for students which include clearly defined benchmarks while students are at the Boys Ranch and connects them to and through the next steps after they leave. All three agencies agree that this joint planning is vital to the process and provides a well designed path for students.

Carson Creek builds a culture based on valuing education (Education is Power!) and doing whatever it takes to hook/engage a student, through extra-curricular activities, career-technical education, sports, and recognition. A strong focus on significant growth in reading and math levels enables the students to understand the importance of and match those skills with career goals in the development of individual student success plans. Between academics and career-technical education classes, students attend school 420 minutes/day. When students pass the GED or earn a diploma, they can take on-line college classes through the local

community college system. Many students are enrolled in community college prior to furlough. Monthly awards assemblies keep achievement in the forefront.

At school, both staff and students, use the LINKS philosophy to drive and inspire us. The staff never gives up. Some successes are quantitative, such as the number of GEDs and diplomas, the rise of math and reading scores, the number of apprentices, the number of credits earned, and the number of ROP unit certificates earned. Many successes are qualitative, such as a recent request from a ward to the Judge, asking that he be allowed to stay at the Sacramento Boys Ranch for six additional weeks past his furlough date, so that he can finish prepping and passing the GED. His request was approved and at the time of this writing, this English-learner student has passed three of the five GED tests, is receiving extra help, and is only a few points away from passing the two final tests. He is an apprentice and has a job waiting for him when he furloughs, using his welding skills (Manufacturing Technology: Metals ROP) in a sign-making business.

Many Carson Creek students come with a limited perspective on the world and a narrow belief system about the future choices. The school program can help students envision opportunities, possibilities, their assets and strengths, and a plan for realization. The school provides the means for students to develop and implement a success plan, bridge

gaps in learning, and in partnership with the Sacramento County Probation Department, prepare for transition to a future without recidivism.

The school gets stronger every year. It has a proud staff and enjoys a positive synergistic relationship with its closest partner, the Sacramento County Probation.

A furloughing student wrote, “At first when I was sent to this facility I hated everything and everyone. But after about the first week I started to notice a lot of things about this place...Mr. C. [GED teacher] pushed me to keep going and not to give up no matter how bad I wanted to, he has given me the motivation to keep going. During my stay here I have learned many new things and built upon what I already know. I have learned how to be more responsible, respectable, and accountable, but I also learned how to weld. I learned a whole lot more about welding metal than I thought there was to know...like how to use the Plasma Cam which I think I am very special to learn.... Thank you – you all have made this stay here become instead of a punishment into a life learned lesson and a way to get my life back on track.”





- *Leadership in Everyday Life*
- *Ingenuity in Thought and Practice*
- *Navigating Choices*
- *Keeping the Promise*
- *Sufficiency in Preparation*

# Physical Education for Body, Mind and Spirit: An Innovative Approach to Meeting P.E. Standards in Alternative Education

by Michael Paynter  
Santa Cruz County Office of Education

The Santa Cruz County Office of Education (SCCOE) runs 16 alternative education school sites spanning the length of its county borders and student demographics. Three and a half years ago, they were fortunate enough to receive a three year grant from the Carol M. White Program at the U.S. Department of Education. This grant application and implementation was a partnership between a private, non-profit corporation called ETR Associates (Education/Training/Research) and the SCCOE Alternative Education Program (AEP). This non-profit states, "ETR's mission is to maximize the physical, social and emotional health of all individuals, families and communities by advancing the work of health, education and social service providers through high-quality research, publications, information resources and programs." (About ETR Associates, 2007) Similarly, SCCOE AEP was looking for creative, holistic and deeply impactful ways to emulate the specialized academic structure it delivers to its students in the classroom to a delivery of physical health and fitness instruction. Hence, Physical Education for Body, Mind and Spirit (PEBMS) was born.



Serving an at-risk student population means many things, including recognizing risk factors related to their education and life. "The negative life outcomes that AEP students are at



risk for include substance abuse, teen pregnancy, HIV/STD infections from risky sexual behavior, being victims or perpetrators of violence, delinquency, juvenile incarceration, stress, mental health problems, poor academic performance, dropping out of high school and consequent employability issues." (Why Offer this Program? PE Needs and Opportunities for AEP Students, 2007) A well tailored and pertinent PE program can help with some of the risk factors. "PE has been identified as a 'best practice' for AEP youth because they often have a need to learn kinesthetically. PE also moderates some of the deficits in their lives that negatively affect their mental health, academic performance, levels of aggression and ability to avoid or recover from substance abuse." (Why Offer this Program? PE Needs and Opportunities for AEP Students, 2007)

At all of the sixteen school sites, and endemic to the AEP at SCCOE, was the lack of

comprehensive Physical Education (PE) programs and/or the student enthusiasm to participate in them if they had existed. Furthermore, SCCOE AEP students did not meet fitness standards at significantly higher rates than average secondary students. Coupled with funding shortages due to the current state of the economy and the difficulty of hiring separate PE teachers with small classroom ADA (average daily attendance), created the need for a thoughtful solution to the physical health and well being of AEP students. Again, PEBMS was such a solution.



Six of the sixteen school sites were chosen as the demonstration project. A cross section of students incorporating

the ethnic demographics of the county, as well as middle and high school aged youth, and students in the Teenage Parent Program were chosen to participate. This selection of students/school sites guaranteed the program touched the diversity represented in the AEP. Students at these six sites participated in the specialized PEBMS courses 2-3 times per week, 50 minutes per session.

Physical Education for Body, Mind and Spirit centers on traditional martial arts and yoga based PE classes. The traditional martial arts offerings (Tai Chi, Aikido and Kung fu) and yoga were chosen as the program's core approach to PE for AEP students. Characteristics of these programs include: 1) a mentor-style relationship between sensei (martial arts teacher) and student, 2) instruction that accesses multiple learning styles, including visual, audio, kinesthetic and social, 3) support for goal setting and attainment of those goals through systems such as belt advancement, and 4) character education delivered via the philosophies embedded within

each style's history and tradition. Traditional martial arts and yoga have many advantages not typically found in school PE programming. Some of these include: building self esteem, offering attractive curricular approaches, providing caring adults who model respect and use firm and consistent discipline, fostering connections between youth and peers and adults, and setting high expectations for youth through goal setting and support.

The goal of the program not only improves the physical fitness, mental health and focus of our students, it also leads to greater academic success and positive life outcomes. The research work of ETR has been essential. They have created linkages to all California State required PE standards with each of the martial arts modalities. (Linking Courses to PE Standards, 2007) They have termed this new evolution of AEP physical fitness, "New PE". "In new PE, there is less emphasis on team sports and competition than in traditional PE classes. Typical PE classes have historically offered less guidance for maintaining a healthful lifestyle. Competitive team sports often make less athletic children feel inadequate, which can further alienate them from exercise opportunities. In new PE, students 'compete' only with themselves — they work on developing their own strength, flexibility, focus and cardio-vascular health. In many of the new PE martial arts and yoga classes, students are offered variations of postures and forms so that everyone is challenged at an appropriate, individualized level." (Why Offer This Program?, New PE and Why it is Important, 2007)



The PEBMS program also offers several eating and nutritional modules including an original, classroom-based course designed specifically to promote lifelong nutrition and fitness practices among high-risk youth. (Come and Get It, 2007) Other sources include specific lessons from a Martial Arts Fitness Curriculum developed in the grant, such as “Portion Distortion Scramble”, “The Question is Fat!” and “Calorie Salary”(Martial Arts Curriculum, 2007).



The demonstration project has been successful and continues to operate at six sites. Feedback from students, staff, parents, instructors and administration has all been positive. Changes and connections in student’s lives have occurred. Meaningful insights and even psycho-emotional healing has taken place. Healthy lifestyle choices and long-term commitments to lasting shifts in habit are not uncommon. As one student noted, “I used to get in fights a lot. Now I’m at peace with myself and other people ... I used to get myself into a lot of crap, disrespecting people ... I’m glad about who I am right now”(Why Offer this Program? The Paradox: Teaching Martial Arts to Troubled Youth, 2007). All in all the “New PE”, like so many other aspects of the AEP, meets students where they are, allowing them the opportunity to show up, grow, change, succeed and gain positive life outcomes in their otherwise turbulent lives.

#### *About the Author*

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# Silver Star Resource Center: A Shining Light for Truant Youth

Monterey County Office of Education

Truancy is a primary indicator of current and future student success. Within Monterey County, there are 7,000 truant students annually. Approximately 1,700 of these students complete individualized mediation with a Monterey County Deputy District Attorney, school representative, parent or guardian, and siblings. The mediation hearing results in one of three outcomes: the student returns to his/her neighborhood school, undergoes formal sentencing through the juvenile court system, or requests enrollment in the Silver Star Resource Center (SSRC).

The individualized mediation process revealed several key factors about truancy. Students are typically not truant simply because they don't feel like attending school; students are truant because life is challenging them in some way and they are in need of assistance beyond a directive to "stop missing school". The legal system may attempt to force students back to school; however, forcing them back to school does not typically remediate the problem. This is why the Monterey County Office of Education, Monterey County District Attorney's Office, and Monterey County Probation Department created the SSRC specifically for truant juveniles.

Habitually truant students need a realistic educational program to assist them in bridging the achievement gap, develop optimism about their educational future, and es-

tablish obtainable future goals. The SSRC implements a multi-disciplinary strategy that includes direct referrals

to on site agencies such as: Monterey County Behavioral Health for mental health disorders, Partners for Peace for family bonding and communication, Second Chance Youth Program for gang-related intervention, Drug and Alcohol Intervention Services for Youth

for Lifeskills education, and the Office for Employment Training for job skills development. Upon enrollment at SSRC, each student receives a comprehensive needs assessment and Individualized Learning Plan.

The Silver Star Resource Center School requires daily attendance utilizing a modified independent

study schedule. Students receive direct instruction in one to two core subjects daily then work an additional hour in a supervised learning lab. Student accountability is increased by the low student: staff ratio, daily interaction with truancy probation, and routine school, court, and family communication. Access to technology, online high school courses via "Cyber High", and concurrent enrollment with Mission Trails Regional Occupational Program or Hartnell Community College assists students in accelerating credit acquisition. Weekly, monthly, and semester based incentives, community partnerships, guest speakers, and field trips provide positive reinforcement for improved student outcomes.



Prior to enrollment at SSRC, student records from the preceding semester show an average student GPA of 0.61, average per-semester credits towards graduation of 6.125, and an attendance rate of 33%. Data from one semester of the 2007-08 school year at SSRC reveals an average student GPA of 2.8, average per-semester credits towards graduation of 23, and a voluntary attendance rate of 93%. During the 2007-08 school year, 22 students won awards from the “Comcast All-Star Challenge” for perfect attendance. The SSRC earned the prestigious California School Board Association Golden Bell Award in 2008 in the student services category.



The commitment of each participating service provider is the vital component in creating success with underserved youth. The Monterey County Office of Education is dedicated towards building these relationships and providing the leadership necessary to galvanize the community around support for the public’s educational system. With these combined efforts, the SSRC anticipates many more years of interagency collaboration and community networking leading to enhanced services to students.



## CEDR SYSTEM

SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

### EDJOIN.ORG

EDJOIN is a job posting and applicant tracking system with over 1,800 hiring agencies, 15,000 jobs, and 250,000 active applicants at any given time. EDJOIN plays a major role in job recruitment within the California education system. District features include a searchable applicant bank, custom applications, screening tools, and data integration services, among many others. Applicants can create profiles, search and apply for jobs at no charge.

[www.edjoin.org](http://www.edjoin.org)

### PROMIS

The Pupil Records Online Management Information System is a complete online and hosted student information system, developed to accommodate attendance accounting, grading, and student tracking for Court and Community Schools, Juvenile Hall, Special Ed., Alternative Ed., and other County Operated Programs. Gradually other K-12 districts adopted PROMIS, and it now supports both the specialties involved in Alternative Ed., and standard K-12 environments.

[www.mypromis.org](http://www.mypromis.org)

### MEMS

The Migrant Ed Management System is a secure, online system that manages all service agreement data, budget data, and student data for Migrant Ed Regions. All data is managed and hosted online including: Service agreements, budget revisions, expenditures, reimbursement claims, student programs, health services, priority for service, mobility data. Reports include budget reports, student reports, ILP forms, CLP forms, demographic reports, annual reports, etc.

[www.mymems.org](http://www.mymems.org)

### SCOHR

The System for California Oral Health Reporting is a web-based system built to address the data collection/reporting needs of AB 1433. SCOHR gives schools and districts access to input, manage, and track electronic oral assessment request forms and all oral health assessment data online. Users can bulk upload data to pre-fill the oral assessment request forms, print pre-filled forms (individually or in-bulk), and export all data into a standardized format.

[www.scohr.org](http://www.scohr.org)

### SEIS

The Special Education Information System was developed to make IEPs easier for teachers to complete and track. Other features include a CASEMIS/state compliance utility, SEACO, BASICS, CSHA, ROPES, AuSPlan, and ACSA/CARS+ goal banks, report generator utilities, DRDP data reporting, and integration features among others. SEIS is a centralized (online and hosted) state-wide system serving over 46 SELPA's and over 750 school districts.

[www.seis.org](http://www.seis.org)

### DOCS MANAGER

DocsManager is a records retention and management system that exploits two emerging technologies, online data management and optical scanning, and blends them into a suite of tools designed with the file management needs of school districts and county offices in mind. DocsManager offers OCR, ICR, and OMR, online searching/access to documents, data centralization (transmitted via web services), automatic purging, digital staples, secure access, etc.

[www.docsmanager.org](http://www.docsmanager.org)

### SCHOOL BUILDER

SchoolBuilder leverages the latest in content management functionality giving school district staff complete control over the web site look, links, and content, without the intervention of a webmaster. SchoolBuilder Internal is where all the content is managed, and serves as an internal, secure resource for teachers, school staff, and district staff alike to communicate and access internal news, events, files, etc. SchoolBuilder offers two integrated systems into one service.

[www.schoolbuilder.org](http://www.schoolbuilder.org)

### Registry Plus

Registry Plus is a job posting and applicant tracking system that is used by 100% of California community college districts. This system includes a fully-featured set of tools to allow for the monitoring of positions from the time of posting to the time of hire. Integration services, custom libraries, event posting, and a searchable applicant bank are some of the tools available to system users. Applicants can search for jobs and complete applications quickly and easily.

[www.ccregistry.org](http://www.ccregistry.org)



SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION



# YOUTHBUILD SAN JOAQUIN

Building Character • Building Homes • Building Futures

By Sheilah Goulart and Kim Mans

San Joaquin County Office of Education

YouthBuild San Joaquin (YBSJ) is a federally funded partnership between the San Joaquin County Office of Education (SJCOE) and the San Joaquin Housing Authority. The purpose of the program is to provide young adults with troubled pasts the opportunity to transform themselves into productive citizens with viable futures through a unique combination of education, skill building, counseling, leadership development, community service, positive values and relationships, high standards of behavior, and clear pathways to a productive future (Leslie, 2007).

In its third year, YBSJ, which operates in the city of Stockton, is gaining state and national recognition. Our mission is to assist undereducated and unemployed young adults, ages 17 1/2-24, obtain their high school diploma or GED; learn construction skills while building affordable housing; develop leadership skills by becoming involved in their community; and secure apprenticeships and jobs within the construction industry after graduating from the program. We provide a comprehensive program that focuses on non-traditional approaches to education and paid on-the-job training.

Initially, the YouthBuild grant was awarded to the SJCOE by the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in 2006. Upon its first successful year of operation, Director Sheilah Goulart sought out an additional grant from the Department of Labor (DOL) to fund expansion of the program. Success can be attributed to a strong collaboration between pro-

gram partners, both locally and at the government level. In kind partners include the SJCOE and John Muir Charter School. Other leveraged partners' contributing to this project include SJCOE's Regional Occupational Centers and Programs (ROC/P), Housing Authority of San Joaquin, One Stop Career Center (WorkNet), San Joaquin Area Apprenticeship Coordinators Association, and the Builders Exchange of Stockton. Additionally, YBSJ coordinates with WorkStartYES to provide workforce investment activities, San Joaquin Delta College to provide advanced training in construction technology, and the juvenile justice system.

All trainees must be high school dropouts and/or have serious skill deficiencies and 10 percent or more must be women. To participate in YBSJ, applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Be in need of a high school diploma or GED
- Meet income eligibility
- Be between the ages of 17 ½ and 24
- Agree to random drug testing
- Be motivated to learn and work hard
- Be ready to be a leader

Once eligibility has been determined, potential trainees complete a series of comprehensive assessments to determine educational deficiencies and occupational skills, as well as a combination of paper/pencil tests, behavioral observations, and individual interviews to determine work readiness. These results are used as a screening device to gauge each applicant's

potential success in YBSJ and to develop an Individual Service Strategy for those who pass the selection process.

After this initial screening process, applicants are invited to participate in an in-depth orientation process described as “Mental Toughness” which includes: expectations, requirements, safety training and basic pre-employment training. Finalists are then selected (based on program space) from the pool of applicants who have persevered and passed this final process. All clients not immediately selected are placed on a waiting list, with 16-18 year olds being automatically enrolled in WorkStartYES. Youth, older than 18, are referred to local education programs or the One-Stop Career Center (WorkNet) for additional services.

Trainees receive academic instruction through John Muir Charter School for one-half of the day and spend the re-



remaining hours in vocational training facilitated by the SJCOE ROC/P either in the construction lab or at the worksite. Trainees have the option of choosing either the construction or masonry tract. Upon successful completion, trainees earn a Construction Certificate from ROC/P that is recognized by the State as well as National Certification that is recognized by the Homebuilders Institute (HBI).

YBSJ follows all OSHA guidelines in the operation of construction projects. Before working in the shop or worksite, all YBSJ trainees must complete OSHA safety certification and safety training for each power tool. YBSJ also provides all trainees with steel toes boots, eye and ear protection, hard hats, and work gloves. In addition, random drugs tests are conducted and only those trainees who test negative for drugs are allowed on the construction site.

At YBSJ, a strong emphasis is placed on leadership development. These opportunities help students build responsible attitudes and behaviors that improve their self image, enhance their academic and skills training, and enable them to succeed in the work place, for example:

- Trainees participate in their own government through an elected policy committee.
- Trainees represented YBSJ at the YouthBuild USA Young Leaders Conference in Washington D.C.
- Trainees attended Youth and Government Day at the State Capital as advocates for state funding and preservation of YouthBuild.
- Leadership Group presented at YBSJ Advisory and Builder’s Exchange of Stockton Memberships meetings.

Community service is a major component of leadership development for YouthBuild participants. Trainees have proven their dedication and commitment by organizing services and giving back to their community in a number of ways:

- Worked with Housing Authority crews to remodel public housing units
- Assisted Habitat for Humanity with a 1200 sq. ft. home addition
- Completed renovation of classrooms and lab at the local community center
- Painted a homeless shelter for a church
- Planned and hosted an annual youth carnival at the local community center
- Built a playhouse for Charterhouse Center for Families

Developing leadership skills, working toward a GED or diploma, and building a home take a serious commitment of time and energy. Thus, maintaining a high level of trainee involvement and retention in YBSJ is enhanced by the ability to offer a student incentive plan. Trainees receive a daily stipend for time spent at the construction site and a weekly bonus for

participating in leadership and community service projects. After twelve weeks, trainees have the potential to increase their initial stipend per week, every three months, based on attainment of satisfactory education, work, and attendance. Trainees who earn the opportunity to work as supervisors are paid extra as a Foreman or Tool Manager for the time they serve. Trainees can also earn bonuses for meeting benchmarks such as passing random drug tests, completing high school diploma or getting his/her GED, increasing his/her Educational Functioning Level (EFL) on the Test of Adult Basic Education and Reading or Math, earning nine college credits, serving on the policy committee, completing the orientation/probation period, and getting a job or enrolling in continuing education.

In addition to stipends and bonuses, supportive services have been coordinated with service delivery agencies to help ensure trainee needs are met in the areas of child care, transportation, work clothes, tools, personal counseling, and healthcare. Furthermore, post-program transition services are provided to assist trainees with career/educational opportunities such as job shadowing opportunities, internships, mentors, links to apprenticeship programs, and job placement opportunities. Thus, trainees are assisted with the development of a post-post program transition plan and 12 months of follow-up services are provided upon completion of YBSJ.

Due to limited funding, YBSJ was unable to address the increasing population and rising recidivism rates within the juvenile justice system and expand services to those in need. In August 2008, YBSJ entered into a partnership with SJCOE's **one.**® Alternative Education Program and San Joaquin County Probation Department to establish a new program, YouthBuild II. By leveraging average daily attendance revenue with funds from probation's Youthful Offender Block Grant, YouthBuild II will annually serve 20 plus in-

carcerated youth housed at the local Juvenile Hall Camp. Trainees attending YouthBuild II will receive vocational education via SJCOE's ROC/P program and participate in leadership development and community service projects coordinated by YBSJ staff. Unlike YBSJ, YouthBuild II trainees will receive their academic education from SJCOE's **one.**® Alternative Education Program rather than John Muir Charter School. Uniquely, no other YouthBuild program in California has formed this type of partnership to expand services to incarcerated youth. What sets YouthBuild II apart from other YouthBuild programs is the level of financial support provided by the San Joaquin County Probation Department. A full-time probation officer is assigned to YBSJ and YouthBuild II to assist with supervision, case management, and drug testing. Youth Offender Block Grant funds cover the cost of these additional trainees' stipends, bonuses, work clothes and boots, bus passes, and transitional housing (if needed).



Currently plans are in place to start a Pre-YouthBuild program for youth incarcerated at the Juvenile Camp. The program is design to provide four to six months of training within the walls, whereby participants will complete Mental Toughness, OSHA certification and safety training, career assessments, and preliminary construction skills. Once they have met certain benchmarks, trainees will be given the option of a furlough to participate in the YBSJ II program. Trainees would be transported outside the walls to the training site and returned to Camp at the end of the day.

The benefits of such programs aimed at youthful offenders are indisputable. Based upon an

outcome and cost/benefit evaluation of a targeted intervention aimed at 388 youthful offenders, researchers found that reduced recidivism and improved educational outcomes exceeded expectations based on similar cohorts (Cohen and Piquero, 2008). Furthermore, there was considerable evidence consistent with a positive benefit-cost ratio, indicating that every dollar spent on the YouthBuild Offender Project was estimated to produce a social return on investment between \$10.80 and \$42.90, with benefits to society ranging between \$134,000 and \$536,000 per participant at a cost to society of about \$12,500 (Cohen and Piquero, 2008).

While these statistics speak for themselves, YouthBuild II need look no farther than its own back yard for a success story. Valentina G., a former gang member and juvenile offender has completely transformed her life as a result of the training, guidance, and support she received through YouthBuild II. Impressively, she recently passed her GED scoring higher than any students in the history of the program. Overall she averaged more than 600 points and on three of the exams she scored over 700 points. Valentina is now going through the process of having her tattoos removed and has enrolled at Delta College. Recently Valentina attended a career fair for area students, where she was found installing redwood flooring panels on a platform with a pneumatic staple gun. Featured in the local Stockton newspaper, Valentina was quoted as saying, "I'm hands-on. I want to be a construction foreman."



The city of Stockton has a high crime, poverty, and high school drop out rate. According to FBI 2006 statistics, Stockton is considered the eighth most dangerous metropolitan area in the United States. In 2004, San Joaquin County had 6,748 juvenile arrests, which is almost double the county average of



3,761 (California Juvenile Delinquency Data, 2006). Clearly, the youth in this area are in need. Thankfully, the YBSJ program and its partners are making a difference in the lives of our troubled youth one trainee at a time. The YBSJ partners feel confident that this project will continue to have a long-term positive impact on the local community and hope to sustain this project long after federal funds cease to exist.



#### **About the Authors:**

Sheilah Goulart is the founder and director of YouthBuild San Joaquin, YouthBuild II, and WorkStartYES. She has worked with programs and at-risk students at the SJCOE for the past 10 years.

Currently Kim Mans is a Career Developer for the WorkStartYes Program. She has worked with programs and at-risk students at the SJCOE for the past 12 years.

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# The Greater San Jose Alternative Education Collaborative

## Santa Clara County Office of Education

The **Greater San Jose Alternative Education Collaborative**, under the auspice of United Way Silicon Valley, and known as the AEC, is a multi-agency network advocating for and working on behalf of at-risk and struggling students in the greater San Jose area.

In the heart of the high-tech center Silicon Valley, income disparities exist and continue. Home to the tenth largest city in the U.S. (San Jose) and agricultural enclaves such as Gilroy, Santa Clara County is a patchwork of diversity, vitality, and disparities. Twenty-five percent of the Santa Clara County's population, almost 400,000 individuals, has household incomes below that needed for economic self-sufficiency. It is a region with an average dropout rate of 20%. The Hispanic community makes up nearly half of local public school students and is the fastest growing demographic. The high immigrant populations (foreign-born immigrants) compose 34.5% of the population countywide but are 55+% in east San Jose neighborhoods. A language other than English is spoken in 41% of the homes countywide and over 81% in east San Jose. While San Jose has long been known as a relatively safe city with below average crime rates, gang affiliation, juvenile crime, dropouts, substance abuse, and truancy have been on the rise among young people.

Established in 1922 and known today as United Way Silicon Valley, UWSV is an independent local affiliate of United Way of America. UWSV is a nonprofit charitable organization, governed by a volunteer Board of Directors and guided by a mission to improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of our commu-

nity. The AEC is a self-sufficiency initiative of UWSV, started in 2005, with the mission of increasing innovation and action to impact high school graduation, reduce dropouts, and ensure multiple pathways to success for our community's youth. The AEC serves as a facilitator with over 50 organizations from multi-sector segments serving at-risk youth: County and local governments, Superior and Juvenile Court, Dept. of Probation, the County Office of Education, local school districts, non-profits, and community-based organizations. The focus is on exchanging information, leveraging opportunities, sharing best practices, and ensuring innovation. The AEC manages a Federal grant on gang intervention-prevention curriculum development, funds capacity-building and new model program development for at-risk youth, and funds annual student impact/teacher mini-grants supporting professionals serving at-risk youth and enhancing student learning. Through these efforts and the informational network, the AEC seeks to change public perceptions on how to deal with disengaged youth (creating a public shift from a "big stick", punitive approach to supportive, asset-based approach); and the further expansion of partnership, cross-agency collaboration, and multi-sector capacity building within the county to serve all youth.

During the first two years, the AEC operated with the support from the Youth Transition Funders Group, Hewlett Foundation, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, Bank of America Foundation, and United Way Silicon Valley. The collaborative has grown and established positive working relationships with over 50

community-based organizations, including county service agencies, city government, the County Office of Education, thirty-two local school districts, law enforcement, and faith-based entities.

One early focal point of the effort was to support the Santa Clara County Juvenile Court Education Task Force (JET) initiative focusing on improving educational outcomes for our vulnerable foster youth population. In its first year, the JET effort worked to build cross-system cooperation and implement a consolidated youth data system to ensure portability of records, improved access and tracking of student performance. The effort is served to:

- focus on a specific target population of youth,
- enable service systems to work together to overcome institutional barriers, collaborate on operational solutions, and incubate and execute reform, address the systemic needs of the larger cohort of all at-risk and struggling youth.

The effort is now being managed by the Santa Clara County Office of Education and more districts and data is being added to continue to build the access and tracking of student performance.

The AEC has also focused on raising the quality of instruction and supporting the professionals working with at-risk students by awarding student impact mini-grants to teachers and youth service providers working with youth in alternative education settings. The program supports innovative educational projects and experiential opportunities for alternative education students. Over the past three years, 113 classroom grants up to \$500 each have been awarded through this ongoing program resulting in improved classroom experience and more engaged youth.

The AEC is also leading a multi-year capacity-building process with California Youth Outreach and Catholic Charities to deal with high risk populations, particularly those students affected by or affiliated with gangs, with the support of a grant from the federal Department of Health and Human Services, Communities Empowering Youth (CEY) program. Together, we are developing a curriculum to be used to train and educate local organizations working with this population in a peer-capacity building model. The ultimate benefit from this CEY initiative will be measurable improvement in the lives of Santa Clara County's most at-risk youth, via more effective and integrated youth empowerment and gang intervention services delivered by the area's community and faith-based organizations.



The AEC is partnering with the county's largest school district, the San Jose Unified (K-12) School District, and investing in a capacity building and demonstration project. With partner funds, this project will build the school district's internal capacity to identify those students most vulnerable to school failure through a retrospective data

mining process. Once the key indicator variables are determined, cohorts of students will be identified and their progress monitored as targeted interventions are tracked according to quantitative success indicators. This will allow for more precise identification of vulnerable students, provide for earlier interventions, ensure their continued monitoring as they change schools, and also provide valuable data related to the relative effectiveness of various intervention strategies and services over time. This project aligns with similar efforts underway in Chicago and Philadelphia. Our hope is to develop a model for using data for early identification, choice of intervention, and tracking of student and school performance over time, particularly in relation to key transition points (elementary to middle school,

middle to high school). Resources will support the capacity of the district for data analysis, evaluation and tracking of key indicators. Follow-up plans will disseminate the findings and model to other school districts. Key objectives of this work include:

Clear identification (on an ongoing basis) of which variables related to student, school, staff and program performance are relevant and useful;

Determination of a common set of performance variables that would be included to evaluate all intervention strategies and thus provide a perspective for comparison of effectiveness;

Earlier and more effective identification of at-risk and failing students and increased capacity for the delivery of evidence-based interventions that may be monitored for effectiveness and impact;

Increased capacity for organizational and staff development in relation to application of a systematic approach to increasing and supporting student performance;

A streamlined referral and tracking system that could accommodate and link multiple intervention programs (educational, behavioral, social, special services).

The AEC serves as convener of the various entities working with youth in alternative education settings by holding quarterly meetings. The meetings are planned to build collaboration, sharing of information, advocacy, partnership, and support to improve the alternative education resources available locally. There are several topics that interests the AEC although the agenda is open and input given by the participants. Topics may include:

- Community Day School Capacity, Programming & Model - best practices

- Dropout Prevention Strategies
- Truancy Abatement & ADA Recovery Programs and Strategies
- Best Practices - Locally and Nationally
- Literacy, Accelerated Credit Recovery, CyberHigh
- Career Technical Education
- Database Capacity & Use of Data to Drive Reform Efforts
- School Climate Impact on Student Performance
- PBIS as an alternative to suspension and expulsions
- Achievement gap
- Middle School issues
- Alternative School options



A meeting last May featured Paul Warren from the CA Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) addressing his recent report to the legislature, *Improving Alternative Education in California*. At this meeting, the AEC co-chairs issued a call to action regarding cross-district and cross-systems cooperation and collaboration on behalf of those served by alternative education.

There is still much more work to be done to assist the many disengaged youth in Santa Clara County. The AEC of United Way Silicon Valley will continue to host quarterly meetings to share information, promote partnerships, leverage existing assets, invest in pilot projects, and stimulate advocacy work at the local and state level. More information can be found at [www.aecnews.org](http://www.aecnews.org).



# From Probation Camp to Community College

Los Angeles County Office of Education

Juvenile offenders returning to their communities after doing time at probation camps need all the help they can get to stay on a positive path. For some young men leaving Camp Gonzales in Calabasas, that extra help comes in the form of mentors from the Los Angeles Youth Opportunity Movement.

LAYOM is a partner with the Los Angeles County Office of Education, the Probation Department and Los Angeles Trade Tech College in the “Students for Higher Education” program. The effort aims to reduce recidivism through education, mentoring, leadership development and intensive transition support before and after youth are released from camp.

“Our goal is to help these young men reconnect to education and training that will enable them to get jobs in high-growth, high-demand industries,” said Martin Flores, LAYOM’s Youthful Offender Director.

At least three months prior to their release, students who have received or are close to receiving their high school diploma or GED credential at the LACOE-run camp school may be selected to participate. These students enroll in online general education college courses through L.A. Trade Tech, and receive support from LAYOM mentors.

Upon their release from camp, students who successfully complete the online classes are enrolled at the college with at least 12 units and a full scholarship. “Many of these students never imagined they would attend college, let alone earn college credits while at camp,” Flores said.

LAYOM case managers closely track the students for the next 12 months, meeting with them at least weekly. They connect students to a variety of services to help them be-

come self-sufficient and stay on the right track, from mental health counseling to paid work experience.

“This program has helped me wake up and see the opportunities that God has in store,” said Jerry R., who now works at LAYOM in the Americorps program. “All I needed was for one person to believe in me and the rest was history.”

More than 250 young men like Jerry have been involved from the program since its launch in 2006. Of 54 students tracked by the program in 2007, more than 60 percent were enrolled in post-secondary education and more than 45 percent were employed.

“The intensive case management is the glue that keeps this program together,” said LACOE Principal Marsha Watkins. “This is an amazing partnership that offers our students at high risk the level of support they need to succeed in the community.”



**On the Rise**—Training in forklift operations helped this program participant obtain immediate, gainful employment.

# JCCS Camp Barret Work Readiness Program

San Diego County Office of Education

Setting goals, creating a game plan and making a difference in the community are just a small portion of what the JCCS Camp Barret Work Readiness Program is all about. Recently the Work Readiness Program, a collaboration between the SDCOE and San Diego County Probation, were awarded the 2008 NACo Achievement Award.



The Work Readiness Program received the National Association of Counties award (NACo) for the effective and innovative services they provide for youth. The program, which started four years ago, consists of five or more eight-week courses that run annually with approximately 20 young men, with a full range of work readiness experiences and trainings.

JCCS staff help the young men complete the program, to ease their transition back into the community and schools. Camp Barret is a rural residential camp for male offenders ages 16 through 21.

“Transitioning students from facilities back into the communities is a valuable service to San Diego County,” says Ed Rulenz, JCCS Project Facilitator. “The entire Work Readiness Program prepares youth for their future, providing them with specific occupation skills, life skills and employment readiness training.”

The in-camp program trains students in preparing resumes, job applications, interview skills, and job retention. The program also provides a Resource Fair arranged by the SDCOE where they meet with prospective employers, educational representatives, commu-

nity service representatives and military recruiters.

Justin Littrell, Work Readiness Program Counselor, says the first thing he tells students upon entering the program is, “Success in life is all about change. If you’re willing to make that change, I guarantee you will be successful.” The SDCOE provides Career Counselors such as Littrell, who specialize in transitioning youth. Career Counselors work with probation staff to provide aftercare services from job placement, school enrollment, even proper attire for their interviews.

“Justin helps us to feel comfortable about making changes in our lives and getting rid of our old ways and lifestyle,” says Rene Lopez, former Camp Barret student. Lopez is now a student at the JCCS’s Metro Region school and is on his way to receiving his GED.

The Work Readiness Program has proven to be an exceptional model for other counties in the NACo community, and has enabled NACo to build a collection of county success stories that can be passed on to other counties.

The Work Readiness Program transitions around 200 students within the fiscal year and plans to expand its services to the East Mesa and Kearny area.

For more information on NACo go to [www.naco.gov](http://www.naco.gov)



# City of San Jose Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force

## Action Collaboration Transformation (ACT): A plan to break the cycle of youth violence and foster hope

### Excerpt from the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force Strategic Work Plan 2008-2011

During the mid-1980s, several San José neighborhoods began experiencing significant increases in drug use, gang violence, and other criminal activity. In response to this emerging trend, community members approached the City Council and the Mayor seeking assistance to purge their neighborhoods of crime and drugs. Project Crackdown was launched as the City of San José's initial response to the call for action from residents and community members. For the first time in the history of San José, several city departments combined efforts to improve the safety of its neighborhoods. The departments who participated in the launch of this effort included Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services (PRNS), San José Police, and the Code Enforcement Division. The San José Police Department (SJPD) was responsive to resident calls for assistance, however, city leaders proactively observed that response efforts needed to approach these social issues in a more coordinated and comprehensive manner in order to address the root causes and not just the "symptoms" of anti-social behavior.

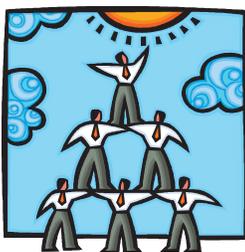
To address the trend, a continuum of services including prevention, intervention, suppression, and rehabilitation was developed to leverage resources through collaboration and coordination. Schools, community and neighborhood groups, other law enforcement agencies, and the County of Santa Clara Probation Department entered into collaborative partnerships, to institute a bold and comprehensive campaign focused on eradicating

drugs and violence at their sources, in some of the most crime-ridden neighborhoods in the city. The spirit of collaboration continued to gain momentum over time, later evolving into the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force (MGPTF), a sustainable approach to addressing the root causes of violence and anti-social behavior with active participation by the City's leadership in conjunction with a network of community partners.

The MGPTF has benefited from the support and vision of two previous mayors, and as a continuous improvement model, will evolve in response to the changing needs of the youth, families, and neighborhoods of the City of San José. In point of fact, the eligible age for services was reduced from twelve (12) years to six (6) years of age to account for a recent increase among 10-14 year old youth to either be the perpetrators or victims of violent crimes. The MGPTF target population is: youth ages 6-24 exhibiting high-risk behaviors; youth committing intentional acts of violence; youth exhibiting high-risk behaviors related to gang lifestyles; youth identified as gang members and/or arrested for gang-related incidents or acts of gang violence; in addition to families (including parents and children) and friends of youth involved with the gang lifestyle or incarcerated for gang-related crimes.

The MGPTF is comprised of city, county, and state government; community-based organizations; SJPD; schools; faith-based organi-





zations; and other community stakeholders. It has become a vehicle for results-oriented collaboration and capacity building, enabling agencies to work together to develop one another's ability to best serve

the target population. The Policy Team evaluates emerging trends, monitors the Technical Team, establishes the overall policy direction of the MGPTF, and facilitates interagency collaboration. The Technical Team executes the policy direction as set out by the Policy Team, provides direct service to youth and their families, and serves as the "safety net" for youth.

Over the past 16 years, in an attempt to respond to the call for action from the community, a series of community safety programs has evolved under the direction of the City of San José and the MGPTF. These community safety and improvement initiatives include Weed and Seed, the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative, Neighborhood Development Center (NDC), Project Blossom, Project Crackdown, and the Safe School Campus Initiative. The City of San José Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services Department also began operating citywide programs such as The Right Connection, Clean Slate, Anti-Graffiti, and Turn-It-Around. The MGPTF recommended and helped institute long-term structural changes that are now in place such as the school-based emergency response protocol through the Safe School Campus Initiative, which allows city staff and the San José Police Department to directly interface with other front-line service providers and community members.

Under the leadership of San José Mayor Chuck Reed, the City Council continued its support of the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force (MGPTF) and the Bringing Everyone's Strengths Together (B.E.S.T.) funding program. BEST is for Fiscal Year 2006-2007 despite significant budget challenges. Within the first year of Mayor Reed's tenure, an addi-

tional \$1 million in new funding for gang prevention and intervention programs was provided through the MGPTF, the first increase since 1999. This continuing support was influenced by research that showed that the B.E.S.T. Program and the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force provided public value.

Mayor Reed and the City Council have continued to focus the B.E.S.T. Program on maximizing school success, increasing school safety, reducing violence and gangs, and measuring short and long-term results. As such, Cycle XVI of the B.E.S.T. Program used an evaluation design that integrated the previously used logic model with a performance-based evaluation system. The success of the San José B.E.S.T. program has been due, in part, to the program's focus on harder to serve youth and youth who are out of the mainstream of most community services. The City of San José has been a standard-bearer for not giving up on some of their most valuable assets — youth out of the mainstream. In the last sixteen years, the B.E.S.T. Program has expended a total of \$31 million in City and \$30 million in matching funds to deliver 9.7 million hours of direct service in order to reduce gang activity and violence. The B.E.S.T. Program and MGPTF have established themselves as major contributing forces to the City of San José's recognition as one of the safest big cities in America.

For more information on the Strategic Work Plan visit our website:

<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/mayor>





# Congratulations



2008/2009 JCCASAC Scholarship recipients

Princess Lopez

Monterey County Office of Education

Cathy Rocha

San Diego County Office of Education

Karla Hernandez

San Diego County Office of Education

Alicía Sarabía

San Diego County Office of Education



Kerone Hill

San Diego County Office of Education



Congratulations!

All who have meditated on the art of governing mankind have been convinced that the fate of empires depends on the education of youth.

-Aristotle-



# Scholarship Application

## About the JCCASAC Scholarship:

Student must be a graduate/GED recipient during the current school year. The nominee needs to show proof of enrollment in a higher education or training program, prior to release of the scholarship funds. The student must attach a one page letter regarding future plans and how the scholarship funds will be used.

## Please complete the following application and return it to:

Paula Mitchell, JCCASAC Treasurer

Santa Clara Department of Education, 1290 Ridder Park Drive, San Jose, CA 95131-2304

For questions call (408)453-6999 or e-mail paula\_mitchell@sccoe.org

### Student Data

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First MI  
Permanent Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street  
Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### School Data

Juvenile Court / Community School Attended: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Graduation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Program Administrator: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
School Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street  
Name of College/Trade School Attending: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Address/City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Enrollment: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Credits: \_\_\_\_\_

### Financial Data

Has student ever received an award from JCCASAC? Yes No  
Circle one Amount Received/Date:

[WWW.JCCASAC.ORG](http://WWW.JCCASAC.ORG)

**ATTACH LETTER FROM THE STUDENT TO  
THIS SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION**

\_\_\_\_\_  
JCCASAC Program Administrator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
JCCASAC Section Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# Boost Academics and Prison Proof Youth

Ripple Effects evidence-based behavior training software



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- Building academic success for each student
- Starting well before contact with the justice system
- Empowering youth themselves to address their problem behaviors and unique personal risk factors
- Addressing disproportionate discipline of students of color

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*Finding the staff and resources to do it*

## Ripple Effects evidence-based programs can help. They:

- Are proven effective with limited financial and human resources
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- Insure against discriminatory and disproportional practices
- Enable accurate monitoring and data management reporting

## Here's how

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**40 years**

**of service to students in**

**Juvenile Court, Community and**

**Alternative School Programs**

**in California**

