

Chapter 13 REVIEW, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of the preceding chapters of this report. This chapter also provides discussion of the key issues raised and major conclusions drawn in each chapter, as well as recommendations based on those issues and conclusions. Specifically, section 13.2 summarizes the status of JJEEP's 1998 recommendations; section 13.3 describes several operational plans that JJEEP will implement during its 2000 cycle to increase effectiveness and efficiency; section 13.4 provides brief discussion and recommendations specific to JJEEP functions and multiple activities; and section 13.5 provides a summary discussion of the chapter.

13.2 Status of 1998 Recommendations

In our 1998 Annual Report to the Department of Education, JJEEP provided a series of recommendations for DOE/JJEEP and DOE and DJJ consideration. JJEEP accompanied each recommendation with suggestions for implementation. The recommendations and suggestions for implementation were designed to address three major problem areas. First, privately operated educational programs earned lower QAR scores than publicly operated educational programs and appeared to have problems securing qualified instructional personnel. School districts also experienced management problems with private providers. Second, transition and curricula were the two areas in which programs received the greatest number of low QAR scores and generated the most concerns and requests for technical assistance. Third, no consequences existed for those programs providing substandard educational services. Other policy recommendations addressed broader issues for DOE and DJJ to consider. These issues included facility size, procedures for school districts to follow in awarding and managing contracts with private providers, funding, consequences for programs and districts whose programs continually received poor educational QAR scores, the need for objective statewide assessments to be used to measure program progress as a supplement to QARs, and aftercare.

Several of these 1998 recommendations were implemented through the passage of HB 349, as discussed in Chapter 2. New legislation, SBE rules, and QAR standards have also addressed the majority of recommendations concerning school districts' management of private providers. The new SBE rule, among other things, requires school districts to research private providers to ensure that they meet certain specified qualifications before school districts offer them a contract. JJEEP and DOE are currently developing a technical

assistance paper (TAP) on procedures for developing model contracts and contract management activities.¹ To further ensure that school districts more effectively manage contracts or cooperative agreements with private providers, JJEPP and DOE incorporated a new contract management standard into the 2000 Educational Quality Assurance Standards for long-term commitment programs, short-term commitment programs, and detention centers. The contract management standard includes a priority indicator entitled “Contract and/or Cooperative Agreement.” This key indicator requires the school district to ensure that a current cooperative agreement or contract with the provider and/or DJJ exists and that the cooperative agreement or contract includes, at a minimum, each of the 13 statutorily required elements listed in s.230.23161 (14), F.S.

In 1998, it was recommended that JJEPP, DOE, and school district personnel provide more technical assistance to private providers. In 1999, JJEPP personnel have not provided as much on-site technical assistance as we would have liked. In addition, JJEPP concluded that securing qualified educational personnel might have been a problem in privately administered programs.

JJEPP recommended greater enforcement and implementation of several paragraphs in s.230.23161, F.S., that deal with qualifications of teachers in juvenile justice programs. S.230.23161 (11), F.S. requires school districts to recruit and train teachers who are interested, qualified, or experienced in educating students in juvenile justice programs. S.230.23161 (14)(g), F.S., requires cooperative agreements to include procedures for provision of qualified instructional personnel, whether supplied by the school district or provided under contract by the provider. S.230.23161 (14)(h), F.S., requires that provisions for improving skills in teaching and working with juvenile delinquents be included in cooperative agreements. More specifically, JJEPP recommended that DOE, school districts, and private providers develop clear definitions of “effective” and “qualified” instructors. Additionally, it was recommended that school districts and providers include in their cooperative agreements a provision requiring at least one certified teacher per program. QAR data for 1999 indicate that these recommendations have not been uniformly implemented, as a large proportion of teachers in Florida’s juvenile justice facilities cannot be classified as qualified. While definitions of “effective” and “qualified” instructional personnel may have been developed, these definitions may vary between private providers and public providers. In addition, school districts did not appear to require that their private providers employ certified teachers, which could be due to misinterpretations of second chance school waivers. Further, many private providers require teachers to attend provider-sponsored inservice in place of district inservice. JJEPP found in 1999 that 96% of teachers in publicly operated educational programs possessed State of Florida teaching certificates, while 48% of teachers in privately operated programs possessed state teaching certificates. Also, seven privately operated educational programs employed no state-certified teachers. Further recommendations addressing qualifications for teachers in juvenile justice programs will be addressed in section 13.4.

¹ Please refer to Chapter 2 in this report for further explanation of the contract management TAP.

JJEEP found in 1998 that transition and curricula were the most problematic areas for juvenile justice educational programs. Chapter 11 provides a detailed analysis of curricula provided in programs in 1999. QAR scores indicate that the quality and appropriateness of academic curricula provided to students have improved. In 1999, JJEEP, with the assistance and support of DOE, developed a guidebook, which addresses model transition procedures and that will be available to all program personnel this year. The guidebook addresses each transition recommendation made in 1998, including enrollment, exit transition procedures, and the development of educational plans for non-ESE students, and other transition issues.

In 1998, JJEEP reported that no consequences existed for educational programs that failed to perform satisfactorily on QARs. JJEEP also suggested re-reviewing educational programs that failed the education portion of the QAR, even if they passed the overall DJJ QAR. Further, in coordination with DOE, JJEEP implemented the corrective actions process in 1999. This corrective actions process has essentially eliminated the need for re-reviews of failing educational programs because JJEEP requires programs and school districts to develop corrective actions plans to address failing standards or indicators and then monitors the implementation of corrective actions plans.² In addition, the Florida Legislature provided consequences for school districts and private providers by amending s.230.23161, F.S. The legislature added paragraph (16)(c) to the statute. It now states that a school district that fails to meet the educational QAR standards will be given six months to achieve compliance with the standards. DOE shall exercise sanctions as prescribed by SBE rules if the district is still below minimum standards after six months. In addition, if a provider fails to meet minimum standards, the school district that holds the contract with that provider shall cancel the provider's contract unless the provider achieves compliance within six months or unless there are documented extenuating circumstances. S.230.23161(16)(c), F.S. states that DOE and JJEEP, through the corrective actions process, essentially implemented informal sanctions for failing programs during the 1999 QAR cycle before the legislature required DOE to prescribe formal sanctions in SBE rules.

JJEEP also recommended that greater enforcement and implementation of s.230.23161(13) and (14), F.S., were needed to ensure that students learn in classrooms that are appropriate, safe, large enough for and conducive to learning. JJEEP suggested that a TAP explaining the rights and responsibilities of district school boards regarding siting, construction, and maintenance of instructional space in DJJ facilities, and interpreting s.230.23161(17), F.S. and s.230.23161(18), F.S. (formerly (13) and (14), respectively), be written and distributed to every district school board. The forthcoming contract management TAP will address some of these issues, but the issue of classroom space remains unaddressed.

JJEEP's final recommendation was to expand its research efforts to collect more comprehensive data during QAR visits, to follow up with site visits to programs with promising practices to validate them, to research aftercare, and to implement longitudinal tracking. JJEEP staff members collected more information during QAR visits through the use of supplemental data collection forms. They also visited programs with identified

² Please refer to Chapter 5 for a detailed explanation and analysis of the corrective action process.

promising practices and carried out process analyses that describe what best practices in juvenile justice education might include.³ More research into aftercare was accomplished in 1999, but further research in this and other areas is needed, as discussed in section 13.4.

13.3 JJEEP's Plans for the 2000 QAR Cycle

The following recommendations were developed internally by JJEEP personnel as part of an organizational self-evaluation of the 1999 QAR cycle. JJEEP also considered input from program and school district personnel that was obtained during QARs, conferences, and workshops. The following plans and recommendations for the 2000 QAR cycle are intended to assist JJEEP in becoming more effective in carrying out its multiple and interrelated functions.

In 1999, JJEEP reviewers provided most technical assistance to programs during their QAR visits. JJEEP personnel made five site visits to school districts and four site visits to programs for the sole purpose of providing technical assistance. DOE provided much more extensive technical assistance that included seven assessment workshops, five curriculum development training sessions, two facility planning workshops, two quality improvement follow-up visits, one district alternative education workshop, and one contract improvement mediation. On-site visits to programs or districts for technical assistance were limited due to lack of staff. There is a need for greater collaboration and coordination of technical assistance to DJJ facilities from both JJEEP and DOE. DOE and JJEEP should consider hiring additional reviewers so that each reviewer has more time to make technical assistance site visits during the QAR cycle. In the alternative, JJEEP, in coordination with DOE, should consider using corrective actions data and program surveys to assess the most pressing technical assistance needs among programs and districts. The 1999 data indicate that transition was the most critical area in which programs and districts require technical assistance. As soon as possible, the JJEEP quality assurance coordinator should schedule QAR reviewers for technical assistance site visits in advance throughout the 2000 cycle. Reviewers could conduct one-day technical assistance site visits at the programs or districts that exhibit the most pressing needs. These visits should be scheduled for the same week a reviewer is scheduled to conduct a QAR of another program in that geographic area. This will save travel expenses and allow the reviewer and program personnel to focus on the areas that require technical assistance. Finally, JJEEP and DOE should work together to create a formal mechanism for the provision of technical assistance that utilizes expert personnel and meets the assessed and expressed needs of programs and school districts.

JJEEP should also continue to provide technical assistance to program and school district personnel in the form of regional workshops and conferences. Feedback from regional workshops and the JJEEP Detention Summit held in 1999 were overwhelmingly positive. In the future, JJEEP should plan the agenda of these workshops to address issues suggested by

³ Please refer to Chapter 7 for an in-depth review of literature, QAR findings, descriptive case studies, and implications regarding best practices in juvenile justice education.

program and school district personnel. Furthermore, a special effort should be made by JJEEP, school districts, and programs to encourage instructional personnel and transition personnel, who are “on the front lines” of juvenile justice education, to attend and participate in regional workshops. Networking between program personnel has helped to foster innovation and reduce the feelings of isolation that teachers in juvenile justice programs often experience. Therefore, JJEEP should schedule unstructured time into regional workshops and conferences for the purpose of networking between personnel from different programs, districts, and providers. Finally, JJEEP should continue to develop topic-specific TAPs that meet the assessed and expressed needs of personnel in programs and school districts.

As section 13.4 will indicate, there is a need for JJEEP to conduct interrelated and ongoing research that is supplemental, but crucial to effectively conducting QARs and technical assistance. The proposed Center for the Study of Education and Prevention of Delinquent and At-Risk Behavior (Center) provides a structure for JJEEP to carry out its expanded research activities. Moreover, the Center will serve the equally important purpose of preparing qualified teachers and providing professional development and training activities to teachers in juvenile justice programs to help them improve their effectiveness.

Chapter 12 provides alarming data concerning the small percentage of certified teachers in private programs and the even smaller number of teachers certified in core academic subjects or ESE related areas. As noted previously, only 48% of private education program teachers were certified, while 96% of public education program teachers were certified. Of 452 teachers in juvenile justice programs in Florida, only 39 (9%) teachers are certified in English or language arts, only 21 (5%) teachers are certified in math areas. This is particularly troublesome as juvenile justice students are often deficient in core subjects. Additionally, there are 117 (26%) out of 452 teacher certifications in ESE areas. This percentage is promising; however, with the prevalence of students in ESE programs, facilities should continue to hire teachers certified in core subjects and ESE areas to accommodate the educational needs of all students in ESE programs.

Current policy allows teachers in dropout prevention (DOP) schools, including all juvenile justice educational programs to teach any subject, regardless of their area of expertise or the area in which they are certified. In fact, a DOP teacher who is certified in any field will be legally classified as “in field,” regardless of the subject he or she teaches, as long as he or she teaches in a DOP school. For instance, a teacher whose teaching certificate states that he or she is certified in physical education is considered to be “in field” if he or she teaches English, math, and science in a DOP school, although that teacher has not earned a certificate in English, math, or science. Current policy also allows second chance schools to hire teachers who do not hold a certificate at all.

Approximately 30% or less of the teachers in commitment programs received comprehensive inservice training that addressed educational issues, ESE issues, and correctional issues on a consistent basis. Inservice training has a tremendous impact on teacher effectiveness, which is one of the most, if not the most, important elements affecting student learning. There is an established need for more qualified teachers and for more comprehensive professional

development opportunities for teachers. In the future, the Center can help to provide effective teacher training based on research-supported models of teacher preparation that combine theory with practical applications. It can also provide ongoing professional development training activities specifically designed to meet the needs of teachers and students in juvenile justice facilities. While the Center is still a concept, there is clear need for the growth of JJEPP into a multiple service entity that can enhance teacher preparation, professional development, technical assistance, and juvenile justice education-related research capabilities in relation to Florida's juvenile justice educational system.

13.4 Discussion and Policy Recommendations

The discussion and recommendations that follow are intended to identify issues that require consideration by the legislature, DOE, school districts, and program personnel. These discussions and recommendations are grouped by topic area and intended to target the most needed areas of change, as evidenced by data analyses, literature reviews, research, and QAR results that are presented in the preceding chapters of this report.

House Bill 349—HB 349 impacts the delivery of educational services in DJJ programs at the school district and facility level by requiring DOE to write a SBE rule that more clearly articulates procedures for transfer of student records, assessment, content of student educational files, school improvement plan process, accountability, and sanctions for educational programs that fail to meet minimum educational standards. HB 349 also requires that programs provide students with 250 days of instruction over a 12-month period, access to GED preparation and testing and appropriate curricula and instruction based on individual student needs. In addition, HB 349 amends s.985.315, F.S., by strongly encouraging participation of certain juveniles in educational/technical or vocational work-related programs for five hours per day, five days per week. DOE has drafted the required SBE rule, but certain provisions of HB 349, like the amendments to s.985.315, F.S., await further interpretation. Additionally, the General Appropriations Act required DOE to conduct a study of the feasibility of a separate school district to administer juvenile justice education in Florida. JJEPP conducted this research and concluded that a separate school district for DJJ was inappropriate given the unique nature of our system, including the more than 200 programs in Florida and the high level of privatization (over 80% at the facility level and nearly 50% at educational programs).

Recommendations:

- As soon as possible, DOE should communicate to school district and program personnel the content of new SBE rules and explain the implications of those rules for the operation of juvenile justice educational programs.
- DOE, JJEPP, and DJJ should work together to clarify all provisions of HB 349 that remain unclear.
- Research clearly indicates that juvenile justice students in Florida would be best served by Florida's present school district system in coordination with quality assurance.

1999 QAR Results—1999 QAR scores are slightly lower than 1998 QAR scores. However, content analyses of QAR reports do not indicate that programs provided less quality services in 1999 than in 1998. Rather, the general decrease in QAR scores largely reflects the fact that programs were held to higher standards in 1999 than they were in 1998. It is imperative to remember that the purpose of conducting QARs is to evaluate and document the quality of educational services that students currently receive, to identify promising practices, and to ensure that problems with the provision of quality services are identified and remedied at the program, district, and state level.

Some providers and school districts provide financial incentives or penalties to staff members based on changes in QAR scores. This is not a practice that is either encouraged or sanctioned by JJEEP or DOE. Numerical scores are used out of necessity to represent a certain quality level of performance. As we learn more about what students need and how to better provide services, QAR standards are raised. Programs may not necessarily improve their numeric scores from year to year because they are being held to higher standards and performance measures.

Recommendation:

- Programs, providers, and school districts should weigh very seriously the decision to award financial incentives or penalties based on QAR scores, and should not base those decisions on year-to-year QAR comparisons.

Technical Assistance—Technical assistance to school districts and on-site educational programs was emphasized in 1999. However, because JJEEP’s reviewers were disproportionately involved with QARs, JJEEP staff members made few site visits to programs or school districts for the sole purpose of providing technical assistance.

Recommendation:

- JJEEP and DOE should solicit input from school districts and programs regarding their most pressing technical assistance needs, and based upon these most pressing needs, develop long-term strategies for providing direct technical assistance to districts and programs.
- JJEEP and DOE should offer and provide technical assistance to districts and programs during the corrective actions process.
- Program and school district personnel should take advantage of the forthcoming transition guidebook and the forthcoming TAP on contract management.

Corrective Actions—The corrective actions process has been an overwhelming success. School districts and programs have successfully developed and implemented corrective actions necessary to overcome deficiencies in the performance of priority indicators. The most frequent and/or significant concerns requiring corrective actions in 1999 pertain to

individualized planning, enrollment and transfer of records, teacher certification, and funding and support.

Recommendations:

- JJEEP and DOE should continue to assist school districts and programs in the development of corrective actions and continue to monitor the corrective actions process.
- Sanctions articulated by DOE in the forthcoming SBE rule required by HB 349 should be integrated into the corrective actions process.
- JJEEP should include in its corrective actions protocol an initial inquiry into the program's need for technical assistance.

Individualized Planning—Sixty percent of the corrective actions generated, and the majority of technical assistance provided during 1999 QAR visits involved transition issues. It is crucial that school districts and programs meet the minimum requirements of the key indicators in the 2000 educational QAR transition standards. Individualized planning emerged as the most significant issue in transition among priority indicators receiving partial or non-performance ratings. The highest number of corrective actions needs involved individualized planning for students who were not in ESE programs. The second highest number of concerns involved individualized planning for students in ESE programs or the development of quality IEPs. Many of the same types of problems associated with educational plans for non-ESE students existed for ESE students.

The development and quality of educational plans for non-ESE students have implications not only for student planning, but for instructional delivery as well. Educational plans for non-ESE students that contain long-term educational goals and short-term instructional objectives specific to individual student needs are necessary to help students and teachers visualize a path for individual student success. If teachers are familiar with the goals and specific instructional objectives in each student's plan, teachers can use those objectives to incorporate a variety of instructional strategies into their lesson plans. In this way, the needs of individual students can be better met.

Recommendations:

- School districts must ensure that personnel in their juvenile justice programs understand the important relationship between educational plans for non-ESE students and effective instructional delivery.
- School districts and program personnel should refine policies and improve procedures for the development of educational plans for non-ESE students and the implementation of those plans during instructional delivery.
- Program policies and procedures governing individualized student planning should reflect the following principles:
 - All personnel involved in instructional delivery and the guidance of students, including the ESE consultant, should participate in writing educational plans for non-ESE students and IEPs for ESE students.

- Educational plans for non-ESE students and IEPs should maximize the opportunities for students to receive individualized instruction and related guidance and support services.
- To eliminate the development of inappropriate and/or generic individual plans and IEPs, personnel writing educational plans for non-ESE students and IEPs should focus on the quality and content of those plans, rather than merely on their form.
- Instructional personnel who document student progress should, at a minimum, document student progress as it relates to the goals and objectives contained in the educational plan or IEP.

Enrollment and Transfer of Records—Effective statewide procedures for transfer of educational records of students in the juvenile justice system are fragmented and uncoordinated. Presently, school districts and DJJ use two separate systems for the transfer of student records. The two most important players in the transfer of records are school district registrars and DJJ probation officers. School districts and individual programs use the Florida Automated System for Transfer of Educational Records (FASTER) system, the district MIS, or the postal service to transfer student records. However, the initiation of the record transfer often does not begin until the student shows up at the program or home school and program/school personnel request records from the previous educational placement. DJJ juvenile probation officers (JPOs) are already required by DJJ policies to consolidate certain documents, including educational records, into a commitment file for each student. However, since JPOs have no way of knowing which specific education records to request, educational programs must consequently request additional records when students enter their programs. To further complicate matters, several school district registrars are not aware that JPOs are authorized to receive the student educational records that they request.

Recommendations:

- DOE and DJJ should develop and codify statewide procedures for the transfer of educational records for students committed to juvenile justice programs. While general procedures for records transfer exist in SBE rules, such procedures must be made specific and communicated to personnel in programs, school districts, public schools, and to JPOs.
- DOE and DJJ should provide training to school district registrars and record personnel and JPOs regarding the necessary contents of student educational records and the collection and transfer of those documents.

Funding and Support—Funding and support concerns were raised in 16 programs in 1999. It is difficult to implement effective educational programs without appropriate funding. During QARs, a JJEEP reviewer identifies insufficient funding concerns by observing the apparent effects of insufficient funding on the provision of educational services within the program.

Recommendations:

- A DOE school finance expert should develop methodology capable of determining the amount of funds earned by an educational program that are, in turn, spent directly on the educational program.
- Once validated, this funding methodology should be incorporated into the QAR process and the fiscal data entered into the JJEEP database. This will enable comparative determination of the costs of variously performing educational programs.

Education and Recidivism in Florida—The literature on the relationship between education and crime suggests that providing effective educational programming to youths in juvenile justice facilities can reduce the likelihood of recidivism. This means that juvenile justice facilities with high quality educational components (measured by QAR scores) should have lower recidivism rates than programs with lower quality educational components. A comparison of JJEEP QAR data and DJJ recidivism data indicates that programs with high QAR scores do have slightly lower recidivism rates than programs with low QAR scores. This pattern remained when control variables, such as facility designation (public/private), educational designation (public/private), facility size, and program security level were included in the analysis. However, the differences in recidivism measures between high and low scoring programs were not statistically significant at the 0.05 level, perhaps because of small sample sizes.

Recommendations:

- JJEEP should conduct longitudinal tracking of recidivism rates of a larger sample of juveniles to more completely assess the relationship between the quality of educational programming in juvenile justice programs and program-level recidivism measures.
- Serious consideration should be given to development of long-term measures of the impact of juvenile justice educational programming on juveniles in addition to recidivism rates, such as successful community reintegration, including educational status, employment, job satisfaction, living conditions, and mental health.

Toward Best Practices in Juvenile Justice Education—Literature reviews, QAR data, and associated research conducted by JJEEP on promising educational practices demonstrate that high quality assurance scores are directly related to the inclusion of promising educational practices. Such promising practices include initial assessments, educational plans, effective school environments, individualized and effective curricula, transition services, aftercare services, and teacher qualifications and training. Programs in Florida that received higher QAR ratings have common processes that address the practices mentioned above, albeit through a variety of service delivery models. However, the quality in which these practices are implemented and provided to students is as important as the presence of these practices. For example, reports show that over 90% of students exiting a residential facility in Florida received some type of aftercare or re-entry service, however, only a minority of students are released to aftercare programs located within the same district as the commitment program.

Finally, certified and trained teaching professionals are needed for successful implementation of the promising practices recommended below.

Recommendations:

- Continued evaluation of programs' successful delivery of identified promising practices is necessary through QARs and supplemental study.
- A variety of assessments are needed to obtain accurate measurement of academic levels, vocational interests, and learning styles for each student.
- It is critical that uniform pre- and post-testing of students be completed to help determine educational gains in relation to specific educational programs and types of students.
- Curricula in juvenile justice programs should be competency-based and provide various diploma options.
- Curricula must be individualized and delivered using a variety of instructional strategies to meet student needs.
- Programs should place emphasis on curricula that address academics, vocational skills, employability skills, social skills, and life skills.
- To produce an effective educational environment,
 - all programs should have an adequate number of teachers and support staff to provide low student to teacher ratios;
 - administrators should collaborate with educational staff to ensure that students have supplemental materials to enhance learning; and
 - classes must be kept small for increased student success in behavior modification and academic individualization.
- Aftercare services need to be consistently administered within students' home or re-entry communities based on security levels and student needs.
- Because the existing research on promising educational practices has been largely descriptive, further research that includes program outcome data addressing academic achievement, employment, and behavior should be conducted and used to guide future policy.

Exit Transition and Aftercare—Literature suggests that transition services are integral to successfully re-integrating students back into their communities during the difficult transition from a juvenile justice facility to one's home. Exit transition services offered by a single program or a receiving school district cannot be successful without adequate agency cooperation and communication. The implementation and evaluation of aftercare programming is preliminary, and empirical evidence that can be used to guide specific policy recommendations is lacking. Students in Florida are not consistently receiving aftercare services based on their assessed needs. The literature suggests that some types of intense surveillance results in negative consequences for students, such as increased technical violations for minor infractions. Best practices research indicates that Florida's juvenile justice educational programs must include comprehensive transition and aftercare services.

Recommendations:

- School district personnel, JPOs, re-entry counselors, and local aftercare programs must work together, share information, and coordinate efforts to provide services that effectively help students re-integrate into their home/receiving schools and communities.
- School district personnel must have information on each returning student including transcripts, transition/exit plans, educational plans, and behavioral and academic performance evaluations from commitment programs.
- Because the transition process is more difficult for students who return to their communities from an “out-of-county” residential facility, JPOs and re-entry counselors should be assigned to individual schools within the district to provide returning students with consistent transition services that are coordinated with individual school and district services.
- Students exiting various juvenile justice facilities should receive a continuum of care.
- Students in Florida should receive aftercare services that are appropriate in type and duration, are based on their security risk and assessed needs.
- Future policy regarding aftercare should be guided by outcomes such as academic achievement, employment, family and peer relations, and subsequent activity of students exiting Florida’s aftercare programs.
- Consideration should be given to implementing targeted quality assurance educational standards for aftercare programs.

Privatization of Juvenile Justice Education—Private facilities provided educational services to nearly 53% of all juvenile justice students in 1998 and nearly 48% of all juvenile justice students in 1999. Further analysis shows that, while only about 6% of all juvenile justice educational components were for-profit in 1998, and 5% were for-profit in 1999, these for-profit corporations served nearly 13% of all juvenile justice students in 1998 and 1999. Private providers tend to operate larger programs. In general, public programs are the smallest and for-profit programs are the largest.

Recommendations:

- School districts must comply with the new SBE rules regarding mandated procedures to be followed before awarding contracts to private providers for educational services.
- School districts must comply with the new contract management and oversight requirements for private providers serving students in juvenile justice programs in their districts.

Exceptional Student Education—Currently, nearly 3,000 students in Florida’s juvenile justice commitment programs have been identified as in need of special education services. Current literature estimates that the number of exceptional students in juvenile justice systems across the nation is generally four to five times higher than the number of exceptional students in the general population. However, information is sparse regarding the specific breakdown of the types of disabilities experienced by students in juvenile justice facilities. This information is needed to improve program design, yet certain components of

educational service delivery for all students have been identified. These components include a strong assessment component, a functional curriculum that meets each student's needs, vocational training opportunities, transitional services that include a continuum of education and related services, strong transition processes with follow-up services, and effective staff training. These components should form the basis of students' IEPs.

A review of QAR scores and corrective action logs indicates that many programs are still struggling with regard to timely review and development of IEPs. The IEP is the core of any educational program developed for students with special needs. It is difficult to conclude that any student with special needs who does not have an operational IEP is receiving appropriate educational services. While the overall program performance for modifications and accommodations in the curriculum, as required for students with disabilities, is in the marginally satisfactory range, 9 programs are performing in the partial range, and instructors in 15 long-term commitment programs and school districts do not have access to IEPs. In addition, there is a shortage of trained special education instructors. The discrepancy in the number of support personnel and the number of instructional personnel having direct access to IEPs raises serious concerns. It is evident that special education services in juvenile justice education are lacking as they are currently being provided. There is a need to expand our knowledge regarding the depth and quality of services being provided to special needs students in juvenile justice programs.

Recommendations:

- It is crucial that juvenile justice program administrators and educators understand federal legislative mandates governing students with disabilities and follow federal and state guidelines in providing educational services to incarcerated youths with disabilities.
- For the purpose of educational program design and appropriate service delivery, it is necessary that the number of students with specific disabilities be identified in every program.
- Because of the shortage of trained special education personnel, it is necessary that clear educational processes are in place in each program that include all of the components discussed above for effective educational service delivery. These include
 - a strong assessment component,
 - a functional curriculum capable of meeting each student's needs,
 - vocational training opportunities,
 - transitional services that include a continuum of education and related services,
 - strong transition processes with follow-up services, and
 - the inclusion of each of these components in students' IEPs.
- Program and school district administrators must provide instructors with ongoing professional development that is specific to delivering appropriate educational services to students with disabilities. Training should go beyond minimal paperwork requirements to address instructional delivery and transition delivery methods that meet the needs of students with a variety of disabilities.

- To ensure that IEPs are developed in a timely manner, the process of obtaining past educational records, reviewing past and current IEPs, and updating IEPs must be a priority of every educational program.
- Programs and school districts must initiate the ESE process for students with disabilities within 11 days of student entry into the facility to comply with federal law and to quickly set in motion the development of quality IEPs, which are the touchstone for the provision of a continuum of individualized services for students.
- It is necessary that all programs score at least in the satisfactory range in making curricula modifications and accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure that these students are being served appropriately.
- IEPs must be individualized and should be utilized as the primary transition-planning document to influence the curriculum taught, to influence instructional strategies used, and to guide assessment procedures and support services provided to special needs students.
- IEPs must be available to all academic and vocational instructors in the program so that everyone who teaches a student with disabilities is familiar with how to provide educational services to individual students.
- School district and program administrators need to seriously consider that more ESE support personnel than instructional personnel have access to IEPs. While additional research is needed, district and program administrators should address the following questions:
 - Are support personnel being utilized as prescribed by a student's IEP?
 - Are the services provided truly matching the individualized academic, vocational, and personal needs of the special needs student?
 - Are support personnel working closely with instructional personnel to support and enhance daily instruction and remediation?
 - Appropriate certification and training of teachers is necessary to ensure that educators are familiar with each student's needs and possess the abilities to effectively utilize IEPs as transitional and instructional delivery tools.
 - JJEEP and DOE should conduct further research into ESE service delivery in Florida's juvenile justice programs. Particular areas requiring more careful study include the specific handicapping conditions of students being served, service delivery models, components and quality of IEPs, and level of compliance with federal and state mandates. This information should be used to assist programs with the development of an ESE service delivery model that meets the specific and individualized needs of students.

Curriculum—Curriculum design and implementation serves as a framework through which instructional delivery, ESE services, assessment, cultural diversity, and academic growth interact. JJEEP performed a content analysis of the QAR indicators related to curriculum and reviewed the current curriculum literature. Although there is not much literature and research specific to curriculum for adjudicated and delinquent youth, the research that does exist suggests that effective curricula for juvenile justice students should incorporate certain components. The curriculum offered should provide individualized academics that address

the varying ability levels of students; access to GED diploma options for appropriate students who are of legal age, are behind in credits, and will most likely not return to school; quality special education services; vocational programming and job preparation skills; psychosocial skills necessary for students to become productive citizens and family members; and multicultural experiences that address the needs and backgrounds of all students. The majority of juvenile justice educational programs in Florida offer instruction in English and math. Approximately three quarters of programs offer social studies and science. Excluding detention centers and short-term commitment programs, approximately 80% of programs offer some form of GED access, but this access ranges from comprehensive preparation and taking of the GED examination to minimal preparation with no opportunities to take the actual exam while the student is in the program. Vocational course offerings and activities are limited to a small percentage of programs. The majority of Florida's juvenile justice educational programs provide satisfactory curricula offerings, as measured by QAR scores. However, a study of the most common reasons why programs received either partial or superior ratings in the academic and practical arts curriculum indicators suggest that programs should implement the following.

Recommendations:

- Programs and school districts must ensure that students receive official grades and credits for work completed and benchmarks mastered.
- The academic curriculum must be individualized to address the ability levels and graduation needs of all students.
- The academic curriculum must be substantial and differentiated.
- Academic courses must be offered on a consistent basis following a regular schedule best suited to the age and needs of students in the program.
- Academic courses must follow official state course descriptions.
- Programs and districts are strongly encouraged to offer hands-on vocational training that provides instruction and experiential opportunities to learn marketable trades and skills.
- A combination of student-centered career awareness and employability skills should be offered or substantially integrated into the curriculum.
- Programs and school districts can meet the academic, social, and vocational abilities, needs, and interests of a variety of students by utilizing course integration, extended scheduling, thematic units, block scheduling, correlated rehabilitation and educational activities, and dual and co-enrollment. Administrators and instructional personnel should participate in the research and training necessary to implement these non-traditional curricular approaches correctly.

Diversity—Findings on the racial makeup of juvenile justice programs indicate that at almost every program security level and in detention centers, the percentage of African-American students exceeded the number of white students in programs reviewed by JJEEP. This indicates a need to provide services that meet the cultural needs of all students. These multicultural needs would include, but not be limited to, multicultural training for all program and district personnel, a meaningful multicultural curriculum for students, and training in the correct implementation of a multicultural curriculum for instructional personnel and administrators. Currently, we do not know how to provide multicultural

education that is truly beneficial to students. The current QAR standards and process merely ensure that programs attempt to include some kind of cultural diversity elements in their programming. Provision of a multicultural experience that addresses the needs and backgrounds of all juvenile justice students also applies to the provision of quality educational services that meet the distinctive needs of both females and males. Although the current literature identifies a number of significant differences in the treatment, mental health, and social services that females need, little information exists to clarify what the different educational needs of males and females are, or if gender-based differences in those needs exist. While gender-specific life and social skills programming is offered in many of Florida's all female juvenile justice programs, very little vocational training is offered.

Recommendations:

- Further study is needed to evaluate the quality of cultural diversity training, the effectiveness of different cultural diversity training programs, and to define an effective multicultural education environment.
- It is necessary that JJEPP and DOE engage in further study of the educational and vocational needs of females, possible gender biases in female programming, and the types of training that teachers need to effectively provide instructional and transition services to females.
- Further long-term study is needed to explore the implications for juvenile justice educational programs of disproportionate African-American student representation in these programs.
- Because instructional and program personnel who are not fully aware of other cultures can inhibit the delivery of effective instructional delivery and appropriate curricula, as soon as effective multicultural training programs are identified, all program and school district personnel should participate in such training.

Teacher Certification and Training—JJEPP has begun to identify promising practices and key components of effective educational services that can truly help students. However, without qualified teachers there is no guarantee that these practices will be effectively implemented. In addition to research and an increased number of certified teachers, improved teacher training, ongoing professional development, and teacher evaluation methods are needed to ensure that promising educational practices have widespread and appropriate utilization.

Teacher quality is fundamental to all other educational reforms. This is evident from both the literature and what JJEPP research has shown regarding quality of educational services in relation to teacher quality. A major area of concern relates to the use of uncertified teachers for academic instruction. This usually occurs when private providers administer their own educational services apart from using school district personnel. Approximately 48% of the teachers in private educational programs are certified. Slightly over two thirds of teachers in all of Florida's juvenile justice facilities are certified. However, very few teachers are certified in ESE areas and core academic subjects, less than half of the teachers in private programs are certified, and teacher participation is severely lacking in comprehensive

professional development and ongoing evaluation. Until teacher quality becomes a priority in juvenile justice education, the most effective educational services will not be available to incarcerated students.

Recommendations:

- The legislature and DOE should take a close look at the effects and potential misapplications of second chance school legislation and SBE rules, specifically Rules 6A-1.0502 and 6A-1.0503, FAC, that allow non-certificated personnel to teach students in juvenile justice educational programs.
- Programs should make every effort to hire and retain State of Florida certified teachers.
- Juvenile justice teachers should be licensed and certified in appropriate grade levels and should be teaching classes in their area(s) of expertise.
- All contracts or cooperative agreements between school districts and providers should require that the educational provider employ, at the very least, one on-site, full-time, teacher certified in a core academic area (English or math) or an ESE-related field.
- When a program employs only one certified teacher, and none of the instructional personnel in core academic areas are certified in those areas, the certified teacher should have specific oversight responsibilities governing the uncertified teachers' individual student planning, lesson plan development, curriculum implementation, and instructional delivery.
- Ongoing professional development for juvenile justice teachers must go beyond that for regular educators. Needs assessments should be administered to teachers and relevant professional development activities planned accordingly.
- The evaluation of teachers in juvenile justice education must be an ongoing process. Student achievement should be monitored in relation to teachers' instructional strategies. Evaluation procedures should include teacher-focused activities such as professional development plans and portfolio assessments. Meaningful evaluation should include self-reflection to allow for individual and constant changes by teachers themselves.

13.5 Summary

In November 1999, the Juvenile Justice Advisory Board (JJAB) held a meeting in Orlando. At this meeting Dr. Bruce Wolford, a national expert on juvenile justice education, made a presentation in which he compared other states' juvenile justice educational practices with those in Florida. Among his conclusions was that Florida's quality assurance, technical assistance, and research practices were an exemplary model for other states to replicate. Nonetheless, the analyses, findings, conclusions, and recommendations in this annual report demonstrate how much more progress is required if Florida is to truly ensure quality and effective education for juvenile justice youth. Moreover, it is evident that what must guide Florida's future juvenile justice educational efforts are focused research results. JJEPP has learned, first-hand, over the past several years the need for proven effective practices. Overall, the prior literature concerning effective educational practices is, in a word, inconclusive. As a result, Florida must continue to conduct various research studies if proven best practices are to be identified and implemented in its juvenile justice educational

programs. In responding to this research mandate in the 2000 cycle, JJEPP will be particularly focused upon (1) uniform pre- and post-academic assessments, (2) increased interest in effective aftercare, and (3) continued longitudinal tracking of youth with regard to community reintegration measures.