

CHAPTER 4

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

4.1 Introduction

As previously discussed in Chapter 1, Juvenile Justice Educational Enhancement Program (JJEPP) and Florida Department of Education (DOE) staff provide technical assistance to juvenile justice educational programs, as required by House Bill (HB) 349. JJEPP quality assurance (QA) reviewers continued to provide the majority of technical assistance on-site during their 2000 QA review visits. Reviewers answered questions, clarified state policies, assisted principals and/or lead educators in networking with staff from other programs, and provided guidelines and examples for improving educational programs. After conducting reviews, reviewers mailed, faxed, or e-mailed additional samples, examples, and materials to principals and/or lead educators and school district contacts. DOE and JJEPP staff also made special site visits to programs and responded to requests from programs for technical assistance.

In June 2000, DOE and JJEPP sponsored the annual statewide juvenile justice education conference at which JJEPP QA reviewers and research staff offered a number of workshops on several requested technical assistance topics. During November and December 2000, JJEPP conducted three regional 1-day conferences to clarify revisions in the 2001 educational QA standards and key indicators. Moreover, QA reviewers and JJEPP research staff participated in and presented workshops on the role, goals, and research findings of JJEPP at a number of statewide, national, and international juvenile justice education conferences across the country. JJEPP also held two 2-day sessions that offered intensive training for peer reviewers who came from juvenile justice educational programs and school districts throughout the state.

DOE and JJEPP produced and distributed technical assistance papers (TAPs) on topics that included transition activities, assessment policies and procedures, graduation guidelines, and academic improvement plans (AIPs). In addition, JJEPP's 1999 annual report received considerable national interest, which resulted in the publication of an edited book focused on describing JJEPP's research and data-driven methodologies for other states interested in continual quality improvement of their juvenile justice education practices.

This chapter includes four subsequent sections. Section 4.2 identifies and discusses the methods of technical assistance JJEPP and DOE provide juvenile justice educational programs and school districts. Section 4.3 presents the frequencies of the various methods of technical assistance and the most frequent topic areas for which technical assistance is provided. Section 4.4 provides annual comparisons of the technical assistance areas that were conducted during 1998, 1999, and 2000. Section 4.5 closes the chapter with a summary that focuses on JJEPP's provision of technical assistance within Florida and throughout the nation and beyond.

4.2 Methods of Technical Assistance Delivery

Networking

During the 2000 QA review cycle, there was a considerable increase in the provision of technical assistance that involved networking. While on-site and by correspondence upon return from a QA review visit, reviewers networked programs with other similar programs or with contact persons who were employing a “best practice” or “promising practice” related to a specific key indicator or other relevant practice.

JJEEP’s database was also used to identify programs that received high QA review scores over an extended period of time. A list of these programs with contact information was sent upon request to interested individuals.

Correspondence

After returning from a QA review, reviewers frequently communicated by telephone and corresponded by mail, fax, and e-mail with school district and program personnel. Reviewers responded to requests for samples of educational planning forms; assessments; school improvement planning documents; curricula; copies of state policies, legislation; statutes, and rules; and documentation of other program procedures. Correspondence also included sending copies of the educational QA standards, lists of relevant websites, and lists of promising practices to both school district and program personnel.

Targeted Technical Assistance Site Visits

JJEEP and DOE personnel provided a total of 44 targeted on-site technical assistance activities to school districts and juvenile justice educational programs in 2000. These efforts focused mainly on educational QA standards training and developing and initiating appropriate corrective actions.

JJEEP conducted three site visits to provide technical assistance on overall educational program improvement. At one of these site visits, school district and program personnel and the QA reviewer covered the areas of transition procedures, curriculum development, instructional delivery, development of a school improvement plan (SIP), exceptional student education (ESE) services delivery, and networking for best practices. At two other sites, the QA reviewer met with school district and program personnel to clarify requirements of the educational QA standards, the enrollment and assessment components of the transition process, and ESE services delivery.

A DOE consultant provided technical assistance to 9 school districts and 18 programs within those districts during 2000. The consultant presented one regional training workshop on

curriculum-based measurement (CBM) to 10 Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) pilot programs, 4 academic curriculum development training sessions, 4 vocational curriculum development training sessions, 2 sessions on transition, 5 sessions on assessment, 1 aftercare vocational placement workshop, 6 sessions on development and implementation of entrepreneurial projects, and 1 training session for clarification and correct implementation of all educational QA standards for a new program.

Conferences

Over 300 practitioners participated in the June 2000 Juvenile Justice Education Institute held by DOE and JJEEP. This annual event provided an opportunity for school districts, providers, and educators to network and share their ideas, strategies, and best practices. JJEEP staff, in conjunction with practitioners and private and public agencies, conducted technical assistance workshops on transition, workforce development, long-term residential facility characteristics, contracts, the extended school year, teacher training, JJEEP data collection procedures, student records, administration, and financing.

JJEEP staff and the DOE consultant were presenters in other regional, state, national, and international workshops and conferences, including:

Regional

- Region II workshop, Workforce Development and Adult Education, Live Oak, Florida, March 2000

Statewide

- Youth in Turmoil Conference, St Petersburg, Florida, February 2000
- Juvenile Justice Education Institute, Haines City, Florida, May-June 2000
- Supplemental Academic Instruction (SAI) Conference, Dropout Prevention, Altamonte Springs, Florida, November 2000

National

- National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Association Conference, St. Petersburg, Florida, March 2000
- American Society of Criminology 52nd Annual Meeting, Crime and Criminology in the Year 2000, San Francisco, California, November 2000
- Sixth Joint Conference of Juvenile Detention and Correctional Services, New Orleans, Louisiana, October 2000

International

- The Behavioral Institute for Children and Adolescents, International Adolescent Conference X, Portland, Oregon, November 2000

A wide audience representing the educational, juvenile justice, and correctional systems from across the state, the nation, and beyond attended these conferences and learned from presentations that focused mainly on action research being conducted on best practices.

Other topics presented addressed JJEEP's research on private/public educational programs at DJJ facilities, aftercare, the QA process, and the mission and structure of JJEEP.

Training

JJEEP provided regional training at meetings, offering updates on new QA and legislative requirements, clarification of the educational QA standards, and inservice training targeted at statewide areas of interest. A statewide meeting was held in September, prior to the regional meetings, during which school district and program representatives were able to provide their input on revising the 2001 educational QA standards. A total of 185 practitioners attended the three regional meetings held in November and December in Orlando, Tallahassee, and Fort Lauderdale. Attendees received training on the revised 2001 educational QA standards, on the transition process and procedures, and on program implementation of workforce development activities.

During the spring and early summer of 2000, practitioners from programs and administrators from school districts across the state assembled for two days at the JJEEP offices in Tallahassee to be trained as peer reviewers. In addition to the intensive instruction that ensured their understanding of the educational QA standards, the 29 peer reviewers were assigned shortly thereafter to "shadowing" experiences and active participation in the educational QA review process. Each peer reviewer had at least one opportunity to serve as a member of a QA review team during 2000.

Technical Assistance Documents

In 2000, JJEEP staff developed several technical assistance documents that promoted research-driven best practices, including an edited book, *Data-Driven Juvenile Justice Education; A Transition Guidebook for Educational Personnel of Juvenile Justice Programs: Providing a Continuum of Care for Delinquent Youth in Education, Treatment, and Conditional Release*; and a draft TAP entitled, *Cooperative Agreements, Purchase Service Contracts, and Contract Management in Juvenile Justice Programs*. The guidebook on transition has been distributed to all programs, school districts, and agencies participating in the DJJ system.

DOE regularly sent TAPs to all school districts for dissemination to DJJ educational programs. Some TAPs addressed transition topics, including assessment, individual educational plan (IEP) development, test accommodation for students in ESE programs, alternative assessment procedures for students in ESE programs, and attendance. Other TAPs addressed service delivery topics, including curriculum development, General Education Development (GED) and special diploma graduation options, support services, and instruction for students in ESE programs. Other TAPs also covered the areas of teacher certification, adequate educational facilities, and interagency collaboration for contract management.

4.3 Frequency of Technical Assistance

In 2000, JJEEP:

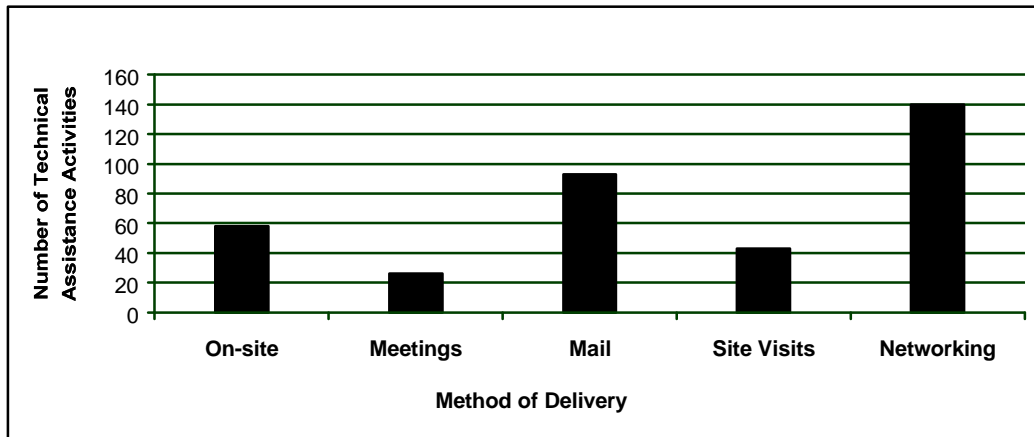
- conducted 361 technical assistance-related activities
- sent 93 pieces of technical assistance-related correspondence
- assisted 140 programs with networking activities

Frequency of Technical Assistance by Method of Delivery

According to the JJEEP monthly activity summary reports for 2000, QA reviewers provided on-site technical assistance 58 times during the year. Also, 93 pieces of technical assistance-related correspondence were delivered by mail, e-mail, fax, or telephone. Additionally, 26 presentations were made at conferences, meetings, and training sessions. A DOE consultant and JJEEP reviewers made 44 special site visits in order to provide technical assistance. According to the QA reviewers, they provided networking information to approximately 140 programs (60%) during and following the QA review visits. Combined, these numbers total 361 occurrences of technical assistance being provided.

Figure 4.3-1 illustrates the most frequent methods of delivery of technical assistance provided by JJEEP and DOE during 2000.

Figure 4.3-1: Frequency of Technical Assistance by Method of Delivery



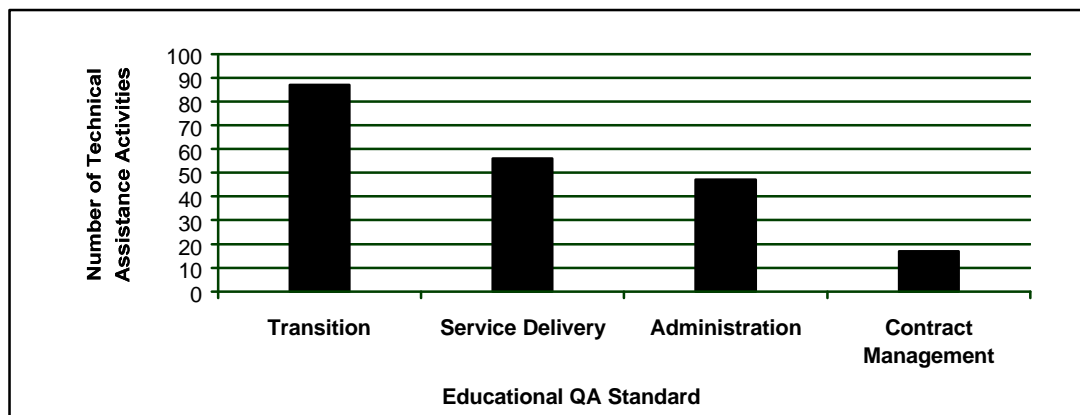
Frequency of Technical Assistance by QA Standard

In 2000, as in 1999, transition continued to be the principal area for which programs and school districts requested technical assistance. Data show that the frequency of technical assistance activities provided during 2000 for each QA standard, in descending order, is:

- transition—87
- service delivery—56
- administration—47
- contract management—17

Figure 4.3-2 illustrates this information. Note: Technical assistance was provided through the variety of methods previously described.

Figure 4.3-2: Frequency of Technical Assistance for Each QA Standard



Frequency of Technical Assistance by Topic

The nine most frequent topics for which technical assistance was provided in 2000 were, in descending order:

1. Academic plans for non-ESE students (31)
 - using an appropriate format for developing and writing academic plans for non-ESE students
 - developing long-term goals and short-term objectives and specific strategies to meet them
2. Assessment information (30)
 - selecting an appropriate battery of academic, vocational, learning styles, and other assessments to meet students' individual needs
 - providing appropriate vocational and career aptitude and interest assessments

- comparing the validity and reliability of various assessments in different program settings
 - assisting students through the assessment process using necessary accommodations and adaptations
3. Academic curriculum and vocational curriculum development (30)
- developing courses of study to meet students' academic and career/vocational needs
 - assigning appropriate courses from the *Florida Course Code Directory and Instructional Personnel Assignments (1999-2000)* to meet academic plans' goals and objectives
 - providing a pre-vocational curriculum
 - providing career awareness courses
 - providing vocational programs at residential long-term commitment programs
 - locating opportunities for dual enrollment in high school and college courses via the Internet
4. Transition information (17)
- transferring student records during entry and exit of students
 - utilizing updated school records
 - ensuring students are appropriately enrolled in the local school district
 - using the school district management information system (MIS)
 - assigning correct courses and grades
 - developing an educational exit plan with students
 - transmitting transcripts to the students' next schools or educational placements
5. GED (14)
- providing guidance to eligible students
 - pre-testing eligible students for GED preparation activities
 - selecting and making available instruction and materials for GED testing preparation
 - providing access to GED testing on-site and off-site
 - identifying and implementing academic and vocational educational activities for students with a GED diploma
6. Contract and cooperative agreement (13)
- ensuring that all required components are included in the documents
 - providing detail and specificity of partners' responsibilities
 - using the contract or cooperative agreement to guide program management
7. Teacher training (11)
- assisting with locating appropriate inservice training
 - developing written professional development plans for educators and staff
 - using peer review training for professional development
 - awarding inservice training points

- providing inservice training for the 250-school day schedule
- offering private provider staff with beginning teacher training through the school district

8. SIPs (8)

- understanding that each program must have a written SIP
- writing SIPs appropriate to the specific needs of each program
- ensuring that a SIP is a collaborative endeavor with program, school district, and community input

9. Policies and procedures (4)

- writing policies and procedures
- following policies and procedures

Other topics for which technical assistance was provided in 2000 include:

- record keeping (3)
- State Board of Education (SBE) Administrative Rules on teacher certification (3)
- program administration (3)
- resources and grants (3)
- guidance programs and other support services (3)
- JJEEP's history and purpose (2)
- alternative scheduling (2)
- general information on statutes relating to education at DJJ facilities (2)
- development of a corrective action plan (CAP) (2)
- instructional delivery (2)
- long-term residential facility characteristics (2)
- use of the Transfer Education Resource Management System (TERMS) and the Florida Automated System for Transfer of Education Records (FASTER) (2)
- behavior management (1)
- teacher recruitment (1)
- community support (1)
- administration and financing (1)
- professional supervision of staff (1)
- JJEEP student outcome data form relating to information available on the school district management information system (MIS) (1)
- documentation of ESE consultation procedures (1)

Topic Areas of Technical Assistance Provided During a Three-Year Period

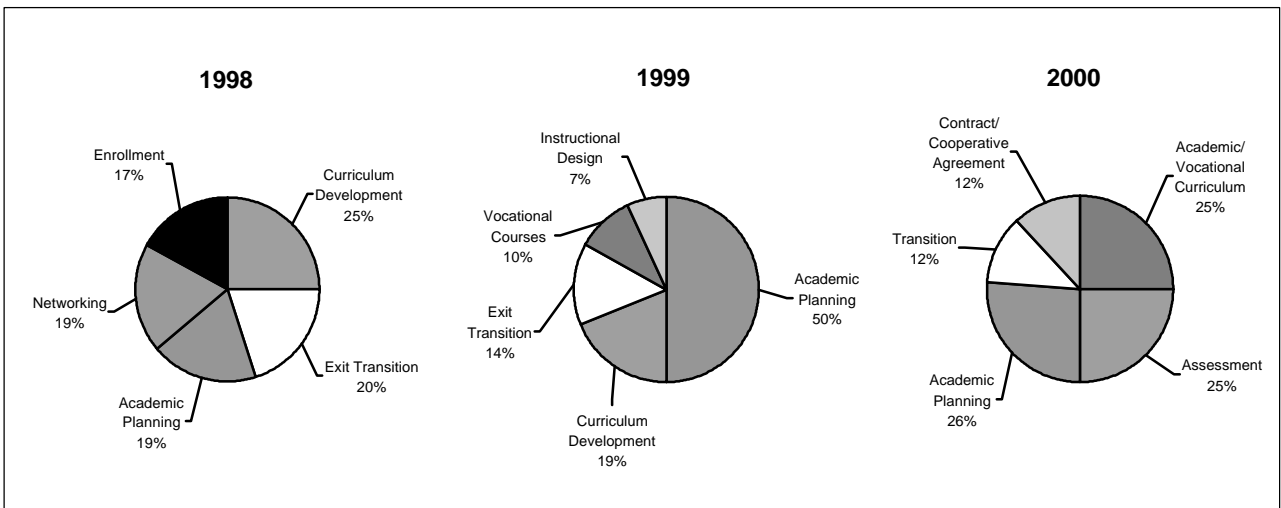
Table 4.3-1 identifies the five main topic areas in which technical assistance was most frequently provided during 1998, 1999, and 2000.

Table 4.3-1: Top Five Topic Areas in Which Technical Assistance was Provided, 1998-2000

| 1998 | 1999 | 2000 |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Curriculum development (23) | Educational plans for non-ESE students (70) | Academic plans (31) |
| Exit transition plans (18) | Curriculum development (26) | Academic/vocational curriculum development (30) |
| Academic plans (17) | Exit transition (18) | Assessment (30) |
| Networking (17) | Career and vocational courses (14) | Exit transition (15) |
| Enrollment (16) | Instructional design (10) | Contract/cooperative agreement (13) |

Figure 4.3-3 illustrates the varying percentages for the top five topic areas in which technical assistance was provided during 1998, 1999, and 2000.

Figure 4.3-3: Percentages of Top Five Topic Areas in Which Technical Assistance was Provided, 1998-2000



During the last three years, the continual collaborative efforts of JJEEP, DOE, DJJ, school districts, and programs have brought increased uniformity and consistency to setting, revising, and applying the educational QA standards, which are based on Florida’s rules and statutes. Practitioners can identify areas of strength and weakness through the QA review process and immediately seek and obtain technical assistance necessary for improvement and growth. Because of the variety of program types and characteristics, the QA reviewers and the DOE consultant have provided technical assistance that addressed components of every indicator in all four standards.

There are, however, topics crucial to the success of programs for which technical assistance is more frequently provided, as is illustrated in Figure 4.3-4. Data from the last three years show a consistent pattern of technical assistance being provided most often in the areas of curriculum development, exit transition, and the development of academic plans.

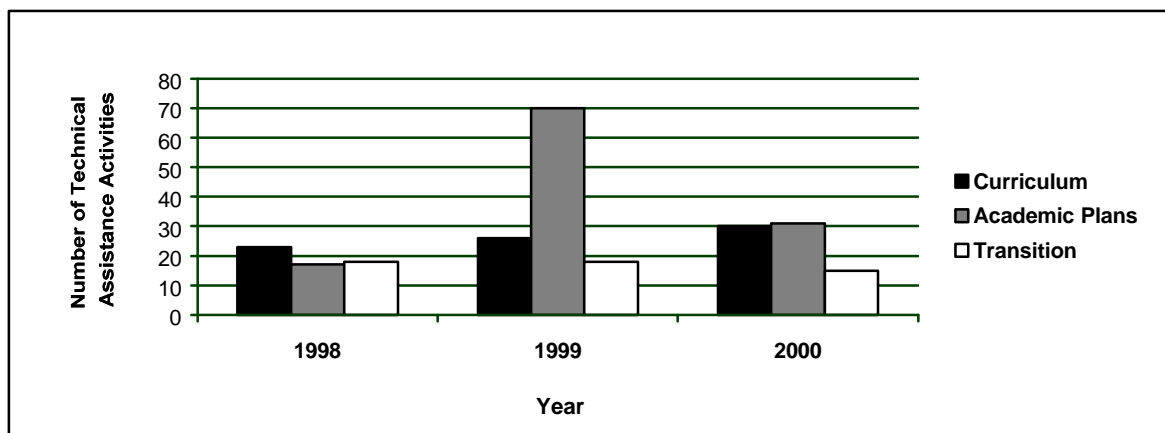
The large number of technical assistance activities provided each year for curriculum development indicates that programs want to offer students an education that is both meaningful and appropriate to their progress. A stronger focus on vocational curriculum development started in 1999 and continued to increase in 2000, due to legislation passed in 2000 requiring workforce development in DJJ facilities.

The sharp rise in 1999 in the number of technical assistance activities relating to developing academic plans was most likely because of the revision and increased specificity of the indicator relating to that topic that year. The impact of networking and extensive dissemination of information on best practices in this area in 1999 subsequently resulted in a drop in the number of requests for technical assistance in this area in 2000. However, this area continued to have the largest number of requests for technical assistance in 2000.

The continuing provision of technical assistance and networking in the topic area of exit transition probably accounts for the significant drop in the number of requests for technical assistance activities on this topic in 2000.

Figure 4.3-4 illustrates the top three main topic areas in which technical assistance was provided during 1998, 1999, and 2000.

Figure 4.3-4: Top Three Topic Areas in Which Technical Assistance was Provided, 1998-2000



JJEEP QA reviewers and the DOE consultant provided more technical assistance activities on assessment in 2000 than in previous years. The need for further clarification on the use of certain assessment tools and the implementation of multiple assessments to ensure a complete evaluation of students' educational needs, as well as new regulations regarding

academic pre- and post-testing of DJJ clients, prompted the increase in the number of requests for assistance in this area.

In 2000, technical assistance on developing contracts and cooperative agreements was provided in order to coincide with the introduction of Standard Four: Contract Management, which relates to supervising school districts' management of contracts.

4.4 Summary

JJEEP and DOE provided technical assistance in 2000 not only to school districts and educational programs, but also to a much wider audience regionally, statewide, nationally, and internationally. The number of technical assistance activities provided to DJJ educational programs increased as was expected, considering the revisions of and additions to the educational QA standards and the raising of the bar to ensure the delivery of high quality educational services to students in juvenile justice facilities.

Of particular note in 2000 was the sharp increase in networking activities, which suggests a strong desire on the part of practitioners not only to improve but also to advance to the level of excellence established by other programs' best practices. The June 2001 Juvenile Justice Education Institute and Southern Conference on Corrections will encourage more of these activities. Moreover, the JJEEP website (www.jjeep.org) will be on-line in the spring of 2001. Plans for this site include allowing school districts, programs, and interested individuals to access a list of best practices, share their successes, and request technical assistance from JJEEP staff.

The number of follow-up and special on-site technical assistance visits increased during 2000 due to collaborative efforts of JJEEP and DOE personnel. It is anticipated that JJEEP QA reviewers will conduct more on-site technical assistance visits in 2001, if the role of peer reviewers in the QA review process increases and also if school district-wide and multiple-program participation are incorporated in the process.

The findings of JJEEP's research, as well as the impact of the findings on the educational practices utilized in serving Florida's adjudicated youths, received widespread attention in 2000 due to presentations at national and international conferences, state and regional meetings, and dissemination of TAPs and other publications. Interest in JJEEP's research findings is expected to increase in the future, and efforts to assist school districts and programs, locally and nationally, by providing relevant technical assistance are a priority for JJEEP and DOE.

