

# Chapter 4

## Juvenile Justice Teacher Characteristics

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Recent research has demonstrated the positive relationship between teacher quality and student learning and, as a result, efforts to raise teacher quality in all classrooms have substantially increased. Both federal and state provisions have been implemented to improve teacher quality, thus ensuring that all teachers, especially those teaching low-income and minority students, are highly qualified by 2006 (The Education Trust, 2003).

The *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) includes the Improving Teacher Quality State Grants program, a combination of the Eisenhower Professional Development and the Class Size Reduction programs. The emphasis of this program is on the utilization of scientifically validated best practices — in this instance, the recruitment, hiring, and training of *highly qualified* teachers. Originally, NCLB required that teachers in core academic areas be highly qualified by the end of the 2005-2006 school year, but allowed states the possibility of an extension until the end of the 2006-2007 school year. Florida was granted such an extension until June 30, 2007 (Florida Department of Education [DOE] Memorandum, November 28, 2005).

Florida's juvenile justice teachers are a distinct population compared to public school teachers. Research conducted in 2005 by the Juvenile Justice Educational Enhancement Program (JJEEP) found that the two groups differ regarding in-field teaching, professional certification, teaching experience, and retention. Based on this research, professional certification of public school teachers nationally was 17% higher than for Florida's juvenile justice teachers (80% compared to 63%). Moreover, 79% of public school teachers nationally in 2005 taught in their areas of certification for English, math, science, and social studies combined, while the same was true for only 34% of juvenile justice teachers.

Finally, juvenile justice teachers were found to have a much higher turnover rate than public school teachers nationally. Specifically, 49% of juvenile justice teachers left the juvenile justice educational system compared to only 16% of public school teachers who left the profession within one year. Essentially, juvenile justice teachers lag behind public school teachers nationally in terms of professional teaching certification, teaching in-field, and retention.

This chapter examines the characteristics of Florida's juvenile justice educators to a greater extent than in previous years. Although 163 QA reviews were conducted in 2006, the information presented is based on 161 reviews because data from two reviews conducted in December are not included in this chapter. The chapter is comprised of four subsequent sections: Section 4.2 briefly reviews the NCLB requirements for highly qualified teachers, Section 4.3 reviews the literature concerning these policy requirements, Section 4.4 provides the findings of teacher qualifications and experience in juvenile justice educational programs statewide, as well as teacher characteristics such as demographics and educational background, and Section 4.5 provides a summary discussion of Florida's juvenile justice teacher characteristics.

## 4.2 HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHER REQUIREMENTS

The signing of NCLB into law in 2002 presented unprecedented challenges for elementary and secondary educational institutions in the United States. Specifically, the mandates for teacher qualification reforms have exacerbated the teacher shortage problem that has plagued the educational system in recent years. Due to the demand for more highly qualified teachers, the impediments of attrition and teacher recruitment have intensified for many educational administrators across the country.

Through the Improving Teacher Quality program mandates of NCLB, schools are now responsible for providing quality education to all students. According to the mandates, schools should achieve this goal through the recruitment, hiring, and training of highly qualified teachers. Highly qualified teacher requirements stipulate that all states develop a plan to ensure that teachers in the core academic areas of English, reading, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, arts, history, economics, and geography have certification in the subject areas they teach by the end of the 2006-2007 school year.

States have some flexibility regarding how teachers can meet these requirements. For example, to demonstrate subject-based competency, the High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE) allows states to develop their own standards for teachers who have been teaching within the school system.

According to NCLB, teachers are highly qualified when they meet these three conditions<sup>1</sup>:

1. obtain a college degree,
  2. receive full certification or licensure, excluding certification that has been “waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis,” and
  3. demonstrate content knowledge in the subject(s) they are teaching or, in the case of elementary teachers, in at least verbal and mathematics ability. This demonstration can come in three forms:
    - New elementary teachers must pass a state test of literacy and numeracy,
    - New secondary teachers must either pass a rigorous subject area test or have a college major in the subject area, or
    - Veteran teachers must pass the state test, have a college major in the subject area, or demonstrate content knowledge through some other uniformly applied process designed by the state, such as the HOUSSE provision.
- (Analysis by The Education Trust, December 2003, pp.2)*

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<sup>1</sup> These are federal requirements. For Florida HOUSSE information, please see <http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-2436/HOUSSEmemo.pdf>.

## 4.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

### Retention

Teacher attrition is a long-standing problem. Almost one third of new public school teachers leave the profession within five years, and at least one fifth decide each year to leave the school at which they are teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2003). The problem of teacher retention has been attributed to misguided teacher recruitment policies that fail to link teacher quality with salary, standards, and certifications.

Retaining quality teachers is an important concern; students who have teachers with little or no preparation learn less than students who have fully prepared teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2001). Over the years, recruitment policies have focused on the employment of untrained teachers or have created short-term training programs that provide minimal preparation for teachers before they enter the classroom. Unfortunately, the emphasis has not been on the recruitment and retention of well-prepared teachers. Specifically, these recruitment programs have focused mainly on satisfying the demand for teachers with *quantity* rather than *quality* (Darling-Hammond, 2001).

Teachers' salaries and students' characteristics are additional factors contributing to teacher turnover and retention. Hanusek, Kain, and Rivkin (2001) found that higher salaries reduced the likelihood that teachers in Texas would leave their districts. Darling-Hammond (2001) argues that teachers are more likely to quit if they work for school districts that offer lower wages or when their wages remain below those for alternative jobs.

Student characteristics—especially behavior, achievement, race, and socioeconomic status—are important elements to teacher retention and recruitment. Teachers are more likely to stay at schools where student achievement is high and racial minority and low-income student enrollment is low (Prince, 2002). The relationship between student characteristics and teacher retention is contingent upon other factors that reflect high-poverty and high-minority schools. Teachers who serve in these institutions earn one third less than those in higher-income schools and they have fewer resources, poorer working conditions, and “greater stress of working with many students and families who have a wide range of needs” (Prince, 2002). Consequently, these schools experience higher turnover rates.

Given the effect of teacher salary and student characteristics such as behavior problems and minority status on teacher retention, it is not surprising that there is a substantial teacher retention problem in juvenile justice schools which are often located in rural areas and managed by private providers who frequently pay less than public schools. Juvenile justice programs have a large population of students who have behavioral problems and, as shown by data presented in Chapter 2, are 60% minority students. These characteristics may explain the stigma associated with teaching delinquent youth.

### Teacher Quality: Certification and Experience

The difficulty of staffing elementary and secondary classrooms with qualified teachers has received a tremendous amount of attention over the past decade. In part, the problem has been fueled by the inability to define and measure the multifaceted concept of teacher quality. Teacher shortages have forced states and institutions to adopt policies that allow teaching positions to be filled by lowering educational standards. This is particularly true

for juvenile justice schools. Teachers in juvenile justice settings are often inexperienced, uncertified, and do not receive comprehensive and ongoing training.

Out-of-field teaching is one of the least recognized problems of under-qualified teachers in classrooms across the nation. This problem is especially prominent given the recruiting and retention problems that elementary and secondary institutions are currently experiencing. Richard Ingersoll, in a study of teachers across the nation (1999), found that one third of all secondary teachers who teach math did not have a major or a minor in math, math education, or related disciplines. About one quarter of all secondary level English teachers did not have a major or a minor in English or related subjects, and in science, the study showed that approximately one fifth of all secondary school teachers did not have at least a minor in one of the sciences or in science education. The same was true for social studies in which one fifth of all social studies teachers did not have at least a minor in any of the social sciences.

Out-of-field teaching assignments have adverse effects on both teachers and students. The increased reliance on out-of-field assignments contributes to teacher attrition by further increasing the preparation time needed to teach a course for which teachers have no formal training. This is magnified for juvenile justice schools where the programs are smaller and tend to require teachers to spread themselves out across subjects in which they are not certified or have little experience teaching. Students are affected by the practice of assigning teachers out of their fields of certification in that the practice lowers the level of efficacy of teachers and negatively affects the learning environment (Ingersoll, 1999).

In addition to professional teacher certification, experience must also be considered when measuring the quality of teachers. According to our 2004 analysis, 6.1% of teachers have taught in a specific juvenile justice program less than one year. Furthermore, 87.3% have taught in a juvenile justice program less than five years. These findings indicate a particularly high teacher turnover rate in juvenile justice institutions as compared to that of district-operated schools. As discussed earlier, Ingersoll determined the public school teacher turnover rate at 39% of new teachers leaving the profession by their fifth year of teaching (2002a; 2002b).

Teacher experience, measured by average years of teaching in a specific program, was also related to the QA indicators as well as overall QA score. Average years of teaching was computed for each program by dividing the total years all the teachers have taught by the number of teachers the program contains. Average years of teaching did affect the overall QA score significantly and positively, with standard 3 having the strongest relationship. The strongest relationships among QA indicators were indicator 2: testing and assessment; indicator 3: student planning; indicator 4: academic curriculum and instruction; indicator 5: employability, career, and technical curriculum; and indicator 7: educational personnel qualifications and professional development. This finding is not surprising given that these indicators directly measure educational quality and service delivery and confirms the earlier finding that teacher turnover matters greatly in the provision of quality education as measured by QA.

Average years of teaching, average months of teaching in a specific program, and the proportion of subject area certified teachers is significantly correlated with the quality of educational services. Policy decisions that affect the quality of education provided in these

institutions are fundamental to JJEEP's mission. Not only is quality education important in and of itself, but there is also a well-established link between education and delinquency.

## 4.4 FINDINGS

This section presents the demographic and educational characteristics of teachers within Florida's juvenile justice educational system. Characteristics of juvenile justice teachers were obtained from the teacher certification data collected by JJEEP during the 2006 QA reviews of 161 juvenile justice programs. The analysis summarizes the gender, age, and race demographics, educational background, levels of certification, in-field and out-of-field teaching rates, and teaching experience of juvenile justice teachers.

JJEEP's expanded data collection efforts include age, race, and degree areas for juvenile justice education teachers. These additional data elements allow JJEEP to provide a more comprehensive profile of juvenile justice teachers than previous efforts. Specifically, comparisons are made to a national sample of public school teachers and to Florida juvenile justice teachers, where available.

Table 4.4-1 reports the distribution by gender and age of juvenile justice teachers who teach at least one course in a juvenile justice program.

**TABLE 4.4-1**  
**Florida Juvenile Justice Teachers by Gender and Age in 2006**

Age	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>19-30</b>	65	39%	102	61%	167	19%
<b>31-40</b>	103	52%	97	49%	200	23%
<b>41-50</b>	81	47%	93	53%	174	20%
<b>51-60</b>	119	48%	129	52%	248	29%
<b>61 and over</b>	47	58%	34	42%	81	9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>870</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: n = 870 due to missing data on 14 teachers.

The breakdown of teachers by gender and age shows that female educators in Florida juvenile justice schools represent a higher percentage of the teaching population, but only slightly. In fact, females comprised 52% of the population of juvenile justice teachers during the 2006 QA review cycle. This is a notable difference in the gender breakdown between juvenile justice program teachers and public school teachers of whom 32% are male, as reported in the 2005 Annual Report.

The expanded data collected on teachers' age indicate that the majority (29%) of juvenile justice teachers are between the ages of 51 and 60. Teachers account for approximately 20% of the distribution in each of the following age groups: 19-30, 31-40, and 41-50; teachers 61 and older comprise the smallest age group, accounting for only 9%. The distribution between males and females is more equalized for the age group 31 and older; however, younger teachers (19-30) are predominantly female (61%).

Table 4.4-2 reports the distribution of juvenile justice teachers, who teach at least one course, by gender and race.

**TABLE 4.4-2**  
**Florida Juvenile Justice Teachers by Gender and Race in 2006**

Race	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>White Non-Hispanic</b>	300	50%	301	50%	601	68%
<b>Black Non-Hispanic</b>	91	40%	136	60%	227	26%
<b>Hispanic</b>	15	47%	17	53%	32	4%
<b>Other</b>	12	63%	7	37%	19	2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>879</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: n = 879 due to missing data on five teachers.

The majority (68%) of teachers in juvenile justice programs are White and of non-Hispanic origin and are fairly evenly distributed by gender. African Americans comprise 26% of the teacher population and are predominantly female. The racial composition of juvenile justice teachers is one of the expanded data elements to JJEEP, as this data has not previously been collected. The 2005 Annual Report presented the national population of public school teachers as 88% White and 6% African American; the Florida juvenile justice teachers are a more racially diverse population. This diversity is also reflected in the racial composition of juvenile justice students, more than 60% of whom are minorities. (For more information on students, see Chapter 2.)

An important requirement of NCLB specifies that teachers are certified or licensed by the state in which they teach. Teachers have the option of obtaining professional certification, temporary certification, a statement of eligibility, or pursue an alternative means. Table 4.4-3 presents the types of certification held by teachers in Florida juvenile justice educational programs and the certification breakdown from 2001 to 2006. Teachers included in the following certification analysis are those 750 teachers who teach academic or elective courses, and excludes those who teach only career, technology, or General Educational Development (GED) preparation courses. An additional seven teachers were excluded from the analysis due to missing data.

**TABLE 4.4-3**  
**Types of Certification 2001-2006**

	Professional		Temporary		Statement of Eligibility		School District Approved		Non-Certified		Total	
	%	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%	n
<b>2001</b>	55%	390	16%	111	16%	111	5%	34	9%	61	101%	707
<b>2002</b>	59%	462	22%	72	9%	72	3%	25	7%	51	100%	778
<b>2003</b>	60%	468	20%	153	7%	53	6%	46	7%	56	100%	776
<b>2004</b>	65%	541	20%	167	10%	80	2%	17	3%	28	100%	833
<b>2005</b>	63%	463	23%	166	10%	74	1%	10	3%	23	100%	736
<b>2006</b>	60%	443	24%	181	7%	51	1%	9	8%	59	100%	743

Note: Row percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding; n = 742 due to missing data on seven teachers.

The number of teachers who have professional certification increased significantly between 2001 and 2004. However, beginning in 2005, the percentage of professionally certified teachers has decreased as the percentage of teachers without certification has increased.

With the impending 2007 deadline for NCLB teacher certification requirements, the decrease in professionally certified teachers and the increase in noncertified teachers may be cause for concern. However, it is important to mention that 25 of the 59 noncertified teachers do not teach academic courses, but teach life skills, physical education, or other elective courses. While the number of noncertified teachers has increased, there has been an increase in the number of temporary certifications which may mark the beginning of an increase in professional certifications.

To be considered teaching *in-field*, teachers must have professional or temporary certification in the core subject areas they teach. Table 4.4-4 displays the breakdown of certifications by academic course (math, English, social studies, and/or science) from 2001-2006. It also shows the number of academic courses taught by *out-of-field* teachers who subsequently taught in those areas but did not hold certification in those content areas.

**TABLE 4.4-4**  
**In-Field/Out-of-Field Teaching in Florida's Juvenile Justice Programs 2001-2006**

Teaching/Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)
<b>MATH COURSES</b>						
Taught by <b>in-field</b> teachers	11 (34)	12 (41)	14 (44)	21 (66)	28 (70)	29 (79)
Taught by <b>out-of-field</b> teachers	89 (274)	88 (299)	86 (261)	79 (252)	72 (181)	72 (198)
<b>TOTAL</b>	100 (308)	100 (340)	100 (305)	100 (318)	100 (318)	101 (277)
<b>ENGLISH COURSES</b>						
Taught by <b>in-field</b> teachers	19 (65)	21 (85)	22 (74)	31 (118)	38 (118)	35 (136)
Taught by <b>out-of-field</b> teachers	81 (282)	79 (319)	78 (268)	69 (265)	62 (196)	65 (248)
<b>TOTAL</b>	100 (347)	100 (404)	100 (342)	100 (383)	100 (314)	100 (384)
<b>SOCIAL STUDIES COURSES</b>						
Taught by <b>in-field</b> teachers	28 (81)	20 (71)	32 (88)	37 (108)	40 (89)	46 (116)
Taught by <b>out-of-field</b> teachers	72 (207)	80 (283)	68 (185)	63 (186)	60 (132)	54 (136)
<b>TOTAL</b>	100 (288)	100 (354)	100 (273)	100 (294)	100 (221)	100 (252)
<b>SCIENCE COURSES</b>						
Taught by <b>in-field</b> teachers	14 (36)	15 (40)	17 (43)	23 (65)	31 (63)	31 (68)
Taught by <b>out-of-field</b> teachers	86 (227)	85 (224)	83 (208)	77 (218)	69 (141)	69 (153)
<b>TOTAL</b>	100 (263)	100 (264)	100 (251)	100 (283)	100 (204)	100 (221)

Note: Row percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

According to the data presented in Table 4.4-4, the majority of juvenile justice teachers of core academic courses do not hold certification in the core content areas. While social studies courses have become more frequently taught by certified teachers over the last five years, there has been less improvement with math, science, and English courses.

Math and science are two areas in which in-field teaching rates remain relatively low. Twenty-nine percent of juvenile justice math teachers were certified in their field and 31% of juvenile justice science teachers were certified in science. While rates more than doubled from 2001 to 2005 for math, science, and English courses, no change occurred for in-field teaching for math and science since the 2005 Annual Report. Overall, the data indicate an increasing trend for in-field teaching in Florida juvenile justice schools over the last five years.

Another important characteristic of teacher qualifications is the education of the teachers. Table 4.4-5 reports the distribution by degree type and level of juvenile justice teachers who teach at least one course and have obtained at least a bachelor's degree. Of the total 848 juvenile justice teachers reviewed, 10% (82) had less than a Bachelor's degree and data were missing for 36 additional teachers. As a result, data presented below pertain to those 766 juvenile justice teachers who had obtained at least a Bachelor's degree and for whom data was available. In this table, "other degree" refers to a bachelor's degree in a subject area (i.e., English) that does not include teacher education course work.

**TABLE 4.4-5**  
**Type and Level of Degrees of Florida Juvenile Justice Teachers in 2006**

Degree Type	Bachelor's		Master's		Advanced Master's		Ed.D./Ph.D.	
	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
<b>Education degree</b>	29%	225	60%	145	87%	13	53%	10
<b>Other degree</b>	71%	541	40%	96	13%	2	47%	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	100%	766	100%	241	100%	15	100%	19

Note: This table reflects only those teachers with at least one bachelor's degree. Due to missing data for 36 teachers, n = 766.

Nearly all (90%) of Florida juvenile justice teachers have a minimum of a bachelor's degree. Of those, 31% (241) reported having obtained at least one master's degree while 2% (19) reported having obtained a doctoral degree. Of the total sample, 10% of the individuals actively teaching had earned less than a Bachelor's degree. This expanded data allow for a comparison to national public school teachers. As reported in the 2005 Annual Report, 98% of the nation's public school teachers have at least a bachelor's degree; of those, 43% had a master's degree and 1% had a doctoral degree.

The majority (71%) of Florida's juvenile justice teachers have bachelor's degrees in subject areas other than education. The opposite is true for master's degrees, 60% of which were earned in an educational field. Doctoral degrees are split evenly between traditional and educational fields, 47% and 53%, respectively.

As one of several educational characteristics particularly important for meeting the highly qualified teacher requirements, teaching experience for 2006 is presented in Table 4.4-6. In this analysis, teaching experience is measured as the number of years in the profession.

**TABLE 4.4-6**  
**Teaching Experience of Florida Juvenile Justice Teachers in 2006**

Years in Teaching Profession	Number of Teachers	%	Cumulative %
<b>Less than 5 years</b>	357	41%	41%
<b>5-10 years</b>	211	24%	65%
<b>11-20 years</b>	167	19%	84%
<b>21+ years</b>	145	17%	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: n = 880 due to missing data on four teachers.

Among the population of 880 Florida juvenile justice teachers, 41% have five years or less professional teaching experience. Teaching experience is used as a proxy measure of teacher retention. In a profession where 41% of teachers have less than five years of experience in the field, retention can be considered relatively low. These findings indicate little or no change in teacher retention for juvenile justice educators compared to findings reported in the 2005 Annual Report.

Relying on data reported on the same population (881 teachers), Table 4.4-7 presents teachers' duration in the same juvenile justice educational program. Three teachers were excluded from this analysis because information on Number of Months of Teaching in a Specific Program was not available.

**TABLE 4.4-7**  
**Teaching Experience in the Same Florida Juvenile Justice Program in 2006**

Years Teaching in Same Program	Number of Teachers	%	Cumulative %
<b>Less than 1 year</b>	321	36%	36%
<b>1 to 5 years</b>	362	41%	78%
<b>6 to 10 years</b>	149	17%	94%
<b>11 to 20 years</b>	42	5%	99%
<b>21+ years</b>	7	1%	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>881</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: n = 881 due to missing data on three teachers.

As noted in Table 4.4-7, 36% of teachers have taught in the same juvenile justice program less than one year. Furthermore, the vast majority (78%) have taught in the same juvenile justice program for fewer than five years.

As discussed earlier, Darling-Hammond determined the national public school teacher turnover rate to be 33% of new teachers leaving the profession by their fifth year of teaching (2003). These findings indicate a particularly high teacher turnover rate for Florida's juvenile justice teachers compared to public school teachers nationally.

## **4.5 SUMMARY DISCUSSION**

This chapter extended the findings from the 2005 Annual Report by comparing Florida juvenile justice teachers to a national sample of public school teachers and provided a more comprehensive profile of Florida juvenile justice teachers. Expanded data collection included demographic (age and race) and educational background variables (degree type and level) which facilitated a more in-depth understanding of this population of teachers. The most relevant findings are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Florida juvenile justice teachers are equally likely to be male or female, but are predominantly White (68%). However, Florida juvenile justice teachers are a much more racially diverse population (of which 32% are of racial minority) when compared to the national sample of public school teachers (12%).

Florida juvenile justice teachers are less likely than public school teachers to hold a bachelor's degree (90% compared to 98%) or a master's degree (32% compared to 43%) but are equally likely to hold a doctoral degree (2% compared to 1%). Juvenile justice teachers who have bachelor's degrees are much more likely to have earned them in a field (71%) other than education.

The number of teachers who have professional certification is down again this year by 5%, while the number of teachers who do not have certification has increased by 5%. This may be a concern in light of the 2007 NCLB requirement (extended one year) for becoming highly qualified. Similarly, in-field teaching for core academic courses has leveled off after five years of steady improvement.

Though not a substantial departure from last year, teaching experience for Florida juvenile justice teachers is still limited. Forty-one percent of juvenile justice teachers have less than five years experience in the teaching profession, and 36% have taught at their current institution less than 12 months. This reflects a high turnover rate and a relatively low experience base for a large proportion of juvenile justice teachers.

Examining Florida's juvenile justice teacher data in light of the impending NCLB highly qualified teacher requirement may present an indication where targeted effort is necessary to improve in the areas of experience and preparation. It will be important for Florida to address these apparent deficiencies related to the recruitment and retention of highly qualified teachers in the juvenile justice education system.

With established relationships between education and delinquency prevention, the adequate staffing of our juvenile justice schools and retention of quality teachers should be of great concern for policymakers. Because hiring highly qualified teachers is a best practice for any educational institution, JJEEP will continue to collect data on juvenile justice teachers in order to inform the policymaking process for this area.