



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

New Jersey Department of Education and Juvenile Justice Commission Partnership to Support Our Shared Youth

November 2, 2016

Nancy Curry, Director, Office of Student Support Services, NJDOE
Tremaine Harrison, Director of Education, JJC
Jennifer LeBaron, Deputy Executive Director, Policy Research and
Planning, JJC
Mary McKillip, Coordinator, Data Collection and Evaluation, NJDOE

Goal: Formalize and sustain joint partnership and cross-system collaboration between the education and juvenile justice systems at the state level.

Past Relationship

- Focus on Compliance
 - *State Facilities Education Act* monitoring
 - Title I, Part D monitoring
 - New Jersey Administrative Code 6A:17-3

Identified Challenges

- Competing priorities
- Lack of initiative to share resources / working in silos
- Reduction in staff / change in administration
- Communication on an “as needed” basis only
- Lack of understanding of the organizational mission and structure of each other’s agency

Joint Partnership and Cross-system Collaboration

- National Leadership Summit on School Climate & Discipline (October 2014)
- Education - Law Enforcement Working Group (October 2014 – November 2015)
- Council on Juvenile Justice System Improvement – Education Subcommittee (February 2015 – present)
 - JJC school survey on alternative disciplinary approaches
 - Reentry guidance for schools

Joint Partnership and Cross-system Collaboration

- Avoiding the School-to-Prison Pipeline Forum: Systems working together to enhance educational opportunities for at-risk students (October 2015)
- Unsafe School Choice Option Working Group (December 2015 – April 2016)
- Social-Emotional Learning Working Group review team (July 2016 – September 2016)

Goal: Through a data-driven process, describe the scope and nature of school-based referrals to the juvenile justice system and develop and implement solutions to address any issues identified.

- May 1, 2015 through May 31, 2016
 - Collected data across eight volunteer NJ counties
 - Bergen, Cape May, Cumberland, Essex, Gloucester, Hudson, Middlesex, and Monmouth
 - Focused on referrals to law enforcement
 - All new delinquency complaints filed with the Family Court provided to JJC
 - Screened complaints to determine which were school-based incidents
 - 8,857 new complaints were filed
 - 977 (11.0%) were school-based

School-Based Delinquency Complaints, by Degree of Charge

Degree	#	%
1 st Degree	3	0.3%
2 nd Degree	20	2.0%
3 rd Degree	212	21.7%
4 th Degree	241	24.7%
DP/PDP*	501	51.3%
Total	977	100.0%

DP/PDP: Disorderly Persons or Petty Disorderly Persons offense

- Of youth referred by the school to law enforcement, 2.3% were referred for very serious offenses (1st/2nd degree).
- Majority of school-based delinquency complaints (51.3%) were for DP/PDP (i.e., “misdemeanors”).
- Of all DP/PDP school-based complaints, criminal mischief; criminal trespass; disorderly conduct; and harassment account for 21%.

DOE's Next Steps to Decrease School-Based Complaints:

- Disseminate information via presentations
 - Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative Conference
 - New Jersey School Boards Association Conference
- Address discipline through schoolwide efforts
 - Build a positive school climate that supports all students
 - Teach students social-emotional learning skills
 - Implement a multi-tiered system of supports
 - Utilize restorative approaches
 - Ensure all classrooms respond effectively
- Provide assistance to schools in understanding the *Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law Enforcement Officials*

Goal: Through a data-driven process, identify the scope and nature of any system barriers faced by youth leaving detention and other juvenile justice out-of-home placements in terms of returning to/enrolling in school; develop solutions to any barriers identified.

JJC's Office of Juvenile Parole & Transitional Services
(July 1, 2015 – January 31, 2016)

- Collected data on all youth committed to JJC as they were released to parole
- Recorded enrollment status at 5 days and 30 days following release
- Described the nature of any barriers to enrollment
 - 130 youth released from JJC
 - 73 students did not yet have a high school diploma or pass the high school equivalency assessment and were expected to enroll in school
- Of those 73, at the 5-day mark, only 30% were enrolled, but by the 30-day mark, 71% were enrolled

Reasons for Delay in Enrollment at 5 Days

Reason	%
School-related delay: Calendar, records, resistance	35%
Youth/family delay: Parent hasn't made appointment	20%
Appointment delay: Scheduled, but more than 5 days after release	16%
JJC delay: Continuing youth in a JJC program	14%

JJC's Next Steps to Improve Enrollment Timeliness

- **10 Days Prior to a Youth's Release:** Contact parent/guardian to confirm the youth's release date and remind parent/guardian to engage the school for enrollment purposes.
- **5 Days Prior to a Youth's Release:** Confirm that parent/guardian engaged the school and document the outcome. If the school has not been engaged, staff will schedule a date to appear at the school with parent/guardian and document both the date and the outcome of meeting with the school.
- **1 Day After a Youth's Release:** Verify that the youth attended the school as scheduled.

School Reentry Working Group

- Initial meeting: June 2016
- Developing resource tool to include:
 - Key factors to support students in successful reentry (cross-system collaboration, identified transition coordinator, smooth transitions, appropriate placement, therapeutic support, ongoing monitoring and evaluation of student progress)
 - Spotlight on best practices in New Jersey schools for student reentry
 - Expectations for school districts with students returning from county detention centers and juvenile justice facilities

Goal: Assist districts to implement strategies that strengthen and streamline the process for youth to return to/enroll in school after confinement.

Review of research and evidence-based practices:

- “A Summary of Best Practices in School Reentry for Incarcerated Youth Returning Home: Submission to the Commonwealth of Virginia Board of Education.” (JustChildren, 2004.)
- “Core principles for reducing recidivism and improving other outcomes for youth in the juvenile justice system.” (Council of State Governments Justice Center, 2014.)
- “Reentry Programs for Students with Disabilities in the Juvenile Justice System: Four State Approaches.” (National Association of State Directors of Special Education, 2011.)
- “Transition planning and services.” (National Center on Education, Disability and Juvenile Justice, 2016.)
- “Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice Re-entry Initiative, Four-year strategic plan.” (Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice, 2010.)

Benefits of Continued Partnership

- Increase collective impact
- Avoid duplication of efforts
- Share responsibility
- Coordinate resources
- Decrease youth involvement with the juvenile justice system
- Assist schools
- Meet goals and objectives of Education Subcommittee