

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE
Pursuant to P.A. 331 of 2006
Section 1007(1)(2)
Academic/Vocational Report

Michigan Department of Corrections
Correctional Facilities Administration
Education Section
April 2007

Sec. 1007(1) (a)

Prisoner Enrollment Data

- Prisoners Enrolled
- Completions
- Waiting Lists

Section 1007(1)(a)
Prisoner Enrollment Data

Fiscal Year Report
September 30, 2006

Program	Number of Prisoners Enrolled	Number of Prisoners Completing Program	Number of Prisoners on Waiting List
Academic	7534	2025	1946
Special Education	308	*	**
Title I	471	*	**
ESL	102	*	**
Total Academic	8415	2025	1946
CTE	2564	2687	3698
Supplemental Programming	524	1222	441
Prison Build/Habitat for Humanity	200	*	**
Pre-Release	759	4032	3104
Youthful Offender Grant	518	153	**

- * Completions for these programs are absorbed in the appropriate Academic and Vocation (CTE) completion totals.
- ** These programs are priority for enrollment; therefore, waiting lists do not apply.

Section 1007(1)(b)

Steps to Improve Program Outcomes

- Programming Improvements
- Waiting List Reduction

Section 1007(b)

Step to Improve Programs and Reduce Waiting Lists

MDOC EDUCATION PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLAN

It is to be noted that improvements to prison schools and prisoner education are identified and addressed continuously in accordance with the Education Action Plan, MPRI developments, labor market trends and Department policies/processes. Recent steps include:

Efficiency of Enrollment and Data Collection

- Continuing to improve the Offender Education Tracking System (OETS), a client-server statewide database.
- Increased the ability to establish and measure outcomes through standardized curriculum software, education program plans, adult learning plans (DLEG) ALP's and revised progress plotters.
- Four daily class periods recommended as optimum student/teacher contact time.
- GED Fast Track training provided for staff.
- Focused on enrolling prisoners who have the greatest probability of completion of a GED or Vocational trade prior to release.
- In response to transfers and increased likelihood of ability to GED test, schools are to notify receiving facilities of those prisoners who are GED ready.
- Instituted delayed program enrollment for long-term releases.

Program Oversight

- Continuously, monitor and review educational programs for consistency through school audits and follow-up with implementation plans.
- Revised Educational committee membership and focus to increase responsiveness to efficiency and prisoner re-entry initiative.
- Overall focus on preparation for release through effective GED preparation, expanded vocational trades and standardized pre-release programming.

Program Improvement through Curriculum Design

- Responded to community/employment trends by incorporating the Skills, Tasks and Results Training (START) (hospitality management) program in food services technology classes.
- Identified KeyTrain for curriculum expansion.
- Test readiness workshops have been developed for 2007 delivery.
- Focused training to improve math and writing skills.
- Purchased GED math videos to enhance math ability.
- Ensure continuous opportunities exist to identify, review and implement "best practices" in the prison schools while working to maintain standardization.
- Give back to the community through service learning projects including Habitat for Humanity (Prison Build & Prison Grow).
- Developed test-taking strategies/anxiety reduction for prisoner students.
- Ensure all trades programs offer a national or state/trade recognized certificate.

Professional Development to Improve Program Efficiency and Effectiveness and to Optimize Data Management

- Provide training to those responsible for data entry to increase efficiency of prisoner placement.
- Provide teachers with enhanced training in the writing of clear, measurable, and effective

education objectives to improve ability to measure gains/ outcomes and to transfer information if prisoner transfers.

Test Administration and Assessment Improvements

- Initiated the conversion from TABE 7/8 to TABE 9/10 to meet US Department of Education federal reporting requirements.
- Increased ESL materials and ESL teacher training.
- Increased number of Special Education teachers, added a Special Education Consultant to improve range of services for special education students both eligible and over-age, and seeking an additional School Psychologist .

AUDIT FACTORS

Audit factors have been assessed, and improvements made with the goal of improving programs and completions, and to reduce waiting lists. The audit factors are dynamic, and under continual review. Following are a sample of current factors that address these areas.

- Increased minimum GED completion expectations for each school.
- The TABE test is administered to active academic students in accordance with state requirements to capture Educational Functioning Level (EFL) gains.
- Increased Minimum CTE core program completion expectations for each school.
- After the 2005-06 audits of all schools, additional audit factors were added to better address program improvement and efficiency expectations.

PRIORITY OF ENROLLMENT

In order to reduce waiting lists and to assure optimal use of classroom space, prisoners are enrolled using the following priority/guidelines:

Academic

- Special Education eligible
- Title I eligible
- No verified GED or high school diploma
- Sentenced for a crime committed on or before December 15, 1998
- Within two years of parole eligibility
- Those beyond two years or maxing out are to be ordered on the waiting list and enrolled by earliest release date

Career and Technical Education

- Special Education eligible with CTE recommendation (minimum reading/math not applicable)
 - R&GC recommendation for CTE training
 - CareerScope and vocational counseling and/or program interest/aptitude
 - Prisoners who have partially completed the program at another facility/school
 - Those beyond five years or maxing out are to be ordered on the waiting list and enrolled by earliest release date after consideration of CareerScope and R&GC recommendations
- All prisoners with a vocational recommendation are to complete the CareerScope and vocational counseling prior to entering an appropriate CTE program.
- Prisoners serving life sentences are to be last priority in academic and career and technical programs. They are only to be enrolled if there is no waiting list and openings exist in the program.

- School Principals and Program Classification Directors will develop a working relationship to ensure rapid classification of prisoners to school.
- School schedules and teacher schedules have been revised to improve prisoner education needs and meet space challenges. Schools are expected to utilize weekends, evenings, 10 hour shifts or other alternatives to meet the staffing and space challenges.

Section 1007(1)(c)

Value and Purpose of Each Program

- Prisoner/Student Perspectives – Education Matters
- Summary of Value and Purpose of MDOC Education Programs
- Articles

Section 1007(1)(c)
Prisoner/Student Perspectives – Education Matters

MDOC: “What have you learned from this class that will help you be successful when you go home?”

(prisoner’s responses to survey conducted by MDOC Education)

“I’ve learned that I could be successful at something. Now I am looking forward to going to the outside world to weld and be a good person to society. Before this class I though I could never find something I like, but now I’m starting to really respect welding.”

“I have learned to be on time. I have learned to have patience with others. I have learned math skills such as how to find area of various figures that I can use out in the world with my construction career.”

“I learned how to read.”

“I feel this class has helped me to be more efficient and productive with my time. This will help me to get into a trade school or community college.”

“I have learned the following: Math 2nd grade to 9th grade; Reading 3rd grade to 9th grade; Science and Social Studies up there somewhere and getting better.”

“I’m glad I’m in school now because it is gonna be fun teaching my children.”

“Upon my release I plan on attending a community college for Computer Aided Graphic Design. The Business Education Technology program allowed me to develop the computer skills (Microsoft Office 2000; Word, Excel and PowerPoint) to make this goal achievable.”

“The skills to actually estimate materials, construct a project, and finish the work safely in an efficient and timely manner. Also, the ability to recognize, identify, strategize and solve problems. Thanks a lot.”

“I learned about automotive education and more – about accomplishment, completion, pride, and self confidence. Mr. Fillinger doesn’t comprehend the work “can’t” and I no longer do either. This class retired the addict, angry person I was. I now have a viable job skill. I am confident in myself and my abilities. I am somebody”.

Section 1007(1)(c)

Summary of Value and Purpose of MDOC Education Programs

Overview

The purpose of education is to increase the functional level of prisoners and prepare them with competencies that will increase their chances for success upon release. Once prisoners are assessed, MDOC education provides instruction to remediate low functioning prisoners and tools to complete the GED examination and/or a skilled trades or job preparation programming. The skills acquired through prisoner education programming will improve opportunities for furthering education or getting employment in our states communities, both of which show positive impact in recidivism reduction.

It must be recognized that many prisoners entering the system are cognitively low-functioning and have had unsuccessful experiences in education and employment. It takes significant effort and an investment of time to bring these people to a functional academic level or to create an interest in education. Job or vocational training is almost impossible to provide for those functioning below basic literacy level.

The primary programmatic focus is the attainment of job preparedness skills that will lead to employment. Additionally, it should be noted that there are ancillary benefits to the education programs for the institution, which include a trained prisoner workforce and development of critical thinking skills.

Explanation of Value/Purpose of Each Program

According to the US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Correctional populations report substantially lower educational attainment than the general civilian non-institutional population. According to another study*, prisoners who had no educational programming while incarcerated were re-incarcerated at a rate of 49.1%, compared to a 19.1% rate for those who completed an educational program.. National studies consistently show the value of correctional education.

The 2006 Washington State Institute of Public Policy Meta-Analysis found statistical significance between education and reduced recidivism:

- ABE 5.1% Reduction
- Job 4.8% Reduction
- Voc. Ed. 12.6% Reduction

In Michigan, the number of prison inmates has tripled in the last 25 years. Many of these prisoners arrive without a high school diploma or GED. According to research compiled by Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth:

- Inmates who participate in basic education programs while incarcerated have lower recidivism rates than those who do not.
- Inmates who participate in basic education programs while incarcerated are more successful at finding and sustaining gainful employment upon release than those who do not.
- A Michigan male with a high school credential or equivalency earns \$6700 more annually than a male without a high school diploma.**

- Persons with lower levels of education attainment are more likely to be unemployed than those with higher levels of education.***

During 2005-2006, approximately 3,337 prisoners earned their GED. Using the wage differential cited above, the potential annual taxable income increase from these graduates is more than \$16 million.

Research shows that by improving employees' basic skills:

- Employees work smarter and better
- Employees cope well with change in the workplace
- Union/management relations improve
- Output and profitability increase

There are currently over 51,000 prisoners incarcerated in Michigan. (does not include those housed in jails) At any given time, approximately 11,000 prisoners are enrolled in academic career and technical education and pre-release programming.

*Virginia Department of Correctional Education

**Institute for Women's Policy Research, 2005

***National Center for Education Statistics

The following academic programs are offered through MDOC Prisoner Education:

ACADEMIC EDUCATION

Adult Basic Education and GED Preparation and GED Testing are provided for prisoners without a high school or GED completion.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special Education programming is provided to eligible prisoners in accordance with the federal Individuals with Disability Education Improvement Act (IDEIA).

TITLE I

Title I is a federally-funded education support service offered to all prisoners who are under 21 years of age, do not have a high school or GED completion, and are enrolled in an academic program.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

English as a Second Language (ESL) is provided for students whose native language is other than English, and who are functioning below a 5th grade level in reading.

CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE)

Studies show that meaningful employment consistently reduces recidivism. The purpose of each Career and Technical Education (CTE) program is to provide work skills that are marketable in the community. It is the expectation that all CTE programs will afford eligible students the opportunity to acquire and develop necessary job skills and aptitudes for meaningful, long-term employment. The programs offer state or national certification upon completion and involve community/industry input and influence. MDOC education programs provide opportunity for community success when combined with other critical support services. CTE programming continuously strives to provide

programming that is responsive to labor market trends and the Michigan Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative (MPRI).

SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAMMING (Key boarding, Technical math, Intro to computers)

This programming is available to prisoners who meet the eligibility criteria.

PRISON BUILD/PRISON GROW

This program provides building components and landscaping plants to non-profit organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, or to government agencies such as Department of Natural Resources, State of Michigan Welcome Centers, reforestation and natural re-plantation projects. Prison Build and Prison Grow employs prisoners who have been successful students in CTE programs with the purpose of enhancing their workplace readiness while providing an opportunity to “give back” to the community.

PRE-RELEASE

Pre-Release programming provides prisoners an opportunity to participate in workplace employment, life skills, and other appropriate community re-entry programming. MDOC Education is responsible for developing and coordinating this standardized programming and for reporting participation. Facilities are encouraged to involve available staff, including non-teaching staffing the delivery of the various components. This course provides a link to the community for prisoners within one year of release.

YOUTHFUL OFFENDER PROGRAM (YOP) (FEDERAL GRANT)

This is a federally-funded program for prisoners under the age of 26 who will be returning to their communities within five years. It is facilitated through partnerships with accredited post-secondary schools and other agencies. The course work primarily focuses on employment skills and related issues. Prisoners are also remediated and tested for a National Career Readiness Certificate.

CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

Prisoners are permitted to enroll, at their own expense, in correspondence courses in accordance with departmental policy. These courses improve the prisoners’ higher-level thinking skills, encourage self growth, and develop greater workplace skills.

Michigan Works! Partners with Department of Corrections



The Michigan Department of Corrections, Camp Cusino, in Shingleton, Michigan offers a pre-release class to prisoners who are within a year of release from prison. The classes are taught by Dennis Kennedy and include instruction on issues such as housing, self-esteem, goal

setting, resume writing, applications and finding employment upon release from prison.

The pre-release class is a precursor to the Michigan Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative (MPRI). Pre-release classes have been around for at least ten (10) years but are now taking on a more critical role since MPRI has been established. Finding employment is key for rehabilitating ex-offenders.

The Alger County Michigan Works! was originally approached over a year ago to present information to the pre-release classes about Michigan Works! and the services they provide. Since that time, the Alger County Michigan Works! Service Center has given approximately a dozen professional and informative presentations. "Rose Wilbur of the Alger County Michigan Works! office has provided the MDOC with an invaluable service. She is professional, friendly and organized regarding her approach with the students," comments Dennis Kennedy. A packet of information is provided to the students by Michigan Works! and the presentation includes such topics as the nature of Michigan Works!, location of service centers throughout Michigan, resume and cover letter writing, interview skills and more. Ms. Wilbur answers questions and explains that finding employment is about "persistence and attitude." Inmates are very receptive to this presentation and their sentiments regarding the sessions include, "information was invaluable" and "wonderful - very insightful and helpful."

Prison Garden Grows Food and Hope

Ellen Baron is the Horticulture Instructor at Huron Valley Complex-Women's Correctional Facility in Ypsilanti, Michigan. Here she writes about the impact of the prison garden on the lives of her horticulture students.

While most would think that it would be impossible for a prisoner to have a positive impact upon a community, the Horticulture program at Huron Valley Complex—Women in Ypsilanti, Michigan is doing just that. This minimum security state correctional facility houses 800 women inmates. As a means to prepare for successful re-entry into the community, the female prisoners are given the opportunity to obtain a GED and to learn vocational skills in areas such as Business Education Technology, Automotive Repair, Graphic Arts, Building Trades, or Horticulture.

Horticulture students begin by learning the basics: plant parts, plant processes, nutrition, soils, and propagation. Students get numerous opportunities to put their skills to work with hands-on experiences. Whether it is growing houseplants or maintaining a perennial

bed, students learn about the intricacies of growing plants. Students are changed by the experience. "When I watch something that I am responsible for grow, it gives me the confidence that I can be successful in life too!" says one student.

One rewarding practical experience for students is working in the vegetable garden. Each student is responsible for a one hundred square foot plot. The student is required to plan, plant, and maintain her plot throughout the growing season. Prior to starting the vegetable garden, students must research each plant's height, spacing needs, starting dates, and maintenance requirements.

"Growing vegetables for others makes me feel helpful instead of hopeless in the most unlikely of places."

In addition, students work in the community garden, a special section of the garden dedicated exclusively for donation to the local Food Gatherers Food Rescue Program in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The community garden is planned by advanced horticulture students. This part of the garden is made up of fifty beds, each fifty square feet in

size. Each bed grows a specific crop—tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, beets, carrots, onions, beans, okra, watermelon, cantaloupe, squash, pumpkins, eggplant, turnips, corn, lettuce, spinach, greens, peas, and strawberries. Over the past four years, the community and personal gardens have produced over 24,000 pounds of produce on approximately one third of an acre. The food is harvested in the morning by the horticulture class, picked up by Food Gatherers by noon and is on the plates of those that need it by dinner time. As one student has described the experience, "I may not be in the best situation at this time, but there are others out there that don't have any idea where their next meal is coming from. Growing vegetables for others makes me feel helpful instead of hopeless in the most unlikely of places."

The benefits to the students of growing fresh produce and giving it to someone who needs it more than they do is immeasurable and life transforming. Gardening in prison gives students the ability to work without societal barriers. They gain priceless experience as actors in an ensemble task to accomplish shared goals, goals they know mean someone else in need is not going hungry that day. One student said, "It's so gratifying to know that I can really make still can make a difference in life."

"The act of putting into your mouth what the earth has grown is perhaps your most direct interaction with the earth."

-- Frances Moore Lappe

Section 1007(1)(d)

Program Outcomes

- Employer/Parolee Testimonials
- Program Outcomes

Measurable Outcomes: Prisoner Education Success Stories...

Employer: Pete Vitums, Management at Lansing Sanitary Supply

“Mike worked in the field through the CMT program and the garment factory while in prison. That combined with his mechanical skills has served him well, but even more than that, are the team concept skills he learned in the CMT program that he has exhibited on the job. The skills he learned in the CMT program have been developed by the company over the years. Mike is definitely considered management here.”

Parolee: *“I think what initially helped me land this job (Lansing Sanitary Supply) was the absolute basics – I had the CMT certification. That caught their attention because I had experience and training in products, usage, and related machines.”* Vocational Student, CMT Completion, Kinross Correctional Facility



Parolee: *“I enjoyed the Horticulture program and wanted to build on that experience. I had never touched a plant before the program, but I love it. It’s my college major.”* Vocational Student, Horticulture Completion, Bellamy Creek Correctional Facility

Current Status: College Student, MSU
Plant Biology Major
Employed – Plant Biology Department, MSU



Parolee: *“I received a wonderful blend of cross-training while in the Horticulture program at Western Wayne. I can’t say enough about the vocational programs offered while I was incarcerated. I never would have pursued this (Organic Farming career) before going to prison, but working with my hands is my true love.”* Vocational Student, Horticulture Completion, Western Wayne Correctional Facility

Current Status: College Student, MSU
Organic Farming Major

Section 1007(d)

Program Outcomes

Per state standards, students functioning below the 9th grade level, are categorized as adult basic education students. Well over 80% of the current prisoner student enrollment is below this level in at least one subject area. For these students, the annual yearly progress standard set by the U. S. Department of Education is one gain in Education Functional Level.

Last year nearly 14,000 prisoners successfully passed one or more of the five required components of the GED test, and 3,300 prisoners passed the GED. The MDOC pass rate for the GED is over 80%, compared with a national average of 71%. The GED is normed against current high school graduates, whose passing rate is 60%.

Approximately 2,300 prisoners are enrolled in vocational programs. It is estimated by the Department of Labor and Economic Growth that over 80% of Michigan's prisoner population is in need of additional vocational training. Vocational training allows for work assignments within the prison (maintaining standards and reducing state costs) and prepares prisoners for return to work in the community.

MDOC Education continues to support and collaborate with Prison Build/Habitat for Humanity and Michigan State Industries through vocational (CTE) programming. Activities have included:

- Jimmy Carter Habitat Project
- Department of Natural Resources projects
- Beautification of Michigan Welcome Centers
- Extensive Community Support Projects

Section 1007(1)(e)

Department Plans for Academic and Vocational Programs

- MPRI Document
- Education Action Plan

Michigan Department of Corrections

Structure and Functions for Vocational & Educational Training Programs

SUMMARY

The Michigan Department of Corrections is creating the *Office of Prisoner Education and Training* (OET) in the Correctional Facilities Administration (CFA) led by the Vocational Training and Academic Instruction Administrator. Within the OET there will be two Unit Managers - one for Vocational Education and Academic Training, and the second for Michigan State Industries & Prison Build. The OET's Mission will be to manage nine core functions in order to implement the six policy statements and recommendations that affect voc/ed programs which were endorsed by the Michigan Prisoner ReEntry Initiative (MPRI) Executive Management Team and approved by the State Policy Team in September, 2005. In summary, the nine core functions are:

1. Develop structures & processes to ensure statewide leadership, policy & direction
2. Improve processes for inter-facility communication and cooperation
3. Create partnerships with local education agencies and employers
4. Develop processes for continuous program improvement for each program
5. Certification, training and professional development of education staff
6. Intake and assessment identifying skill requirements, learning disabilities, etc.
7. Competency based curriculums, alignment with certifying groups and employers
8. Instructional delivery systems that reflect marketable skill requirements
9. Uniform standards for assessment and follow-up based on national models

The six policy statements the OET will be responsible to implement are:

Phase I: Getting Ready; The Institutional Phase

- ***Policy Statement 14: Behaviors and Attitudes:*** Provide cognitive behavioral therapy, peer support, mentoring, and basic living skills programs that improve offenders' behaviors, attitudes, motivation, and ability to live independently, succeed in the community, and maintain a crime-free life.
- ***Policy Statement 15: Education and Vocational Training:*** Teach prisoners functional, educational, and vocational competencies based on employment market demand and public safety requirements

Phase Two: Going Home; The ReEntry Planning Phase

- ***Policy Statement 16: Work Experience:*** Provide prisoners with opportunities to participate in work assignments and skill-building programs that build toward successful careers in the community.
- ***Policy Statement 21: Creation of Employment Opportunities:*** Promote, where appropriate, the employment of people released from prison and jail, and facilitate the creation of job opportunities for this population that will benefit communities.
- ***Policy Statement 22: Workforce development and the transition plan:*** Connect prisoners to employment, including supportive employment and employment services, before their release the community.

Phase Three: Staying Home: The Community and Parole Discharge Phase

- ***Policy Statement 28: Job Development and Supportive Employment: Recognize and address the obstacles that make it difficult for an ex-offender to obtain and retain viable employment while under community supervision.***
1. Develop structures and processes to ensure statewide leadership, policy and direction
 - Ensure adequate and equitable funding policies through state leadership
 - Designate individuals responsible for coordinating vocational programming in the state.
 - Clearly delineate roles of Central Office education staff and make those roles known to local program staff.
 - Maintain effective lines of communication between state office and local programs.
 - Use State Education Plan to guide policy and curricular decisions at the state and local levels.
 - Seek to articulate statewide programs with the state's Career Prep system components to more effectively meet the demands of a changing labor market.
 2. Improve processes for inter-facility communication and cooperation
 - Demonstrate structures and processes for education staff from different facilities to communicate with each other and share information.
 - Provide information on transferring students related to needs, interests, and progress within the respective programs.
 3. Create partnerships with local education agencies and employers
 - Establish and actively use formal relationships with local educational agencies for planning and implementing vocational programs.
 - Establish and actively use formal relationships with local area employers for planning and implementing vocational programs.
 - Use employer groups to design school-based experiences to enable students to gain skills needed in real workplace settings.
 4. Develop processes for continuous program improvement for each program
 - Define clear mission and vision for each program.
 - Demonstrate agreement among wardens, principals and classification directors with policies and procedures affecting programs.
 - Use data to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses to incorporate in program improvement plans.
 5. Certification, training and professional development of education staff
 - Provide opportunities for professional development on a regular, ongoing basis.
 - Provide incentives for staff to avail themselves of training.
 - Provide option for updating staff on educational policies and practices initiated by the Michigan Department of Education.
 6. Intake and assessment identifying skill requirements, learning disabilities, etc.
 - Identify needs and interests of individuals related to educational programming.
 - Place prisoners into appropriate vocational programs, based on identified needs and interests.
 7. Competency-based curriculums; alignment with certifying groups and employers
 - Design and utilize competency-based curricula.
 - Reflect with the curriculum the needs of individuals and labor market trends of the community and state.
 - Ensure consistency across facilities within any given curricular or program area.
 - Involve community agencies and employer groups in the design of curricula.
 - Uses statewide systems, such as curriculum committees, to review and update program curricula.
 - Makes use of state Career Pathways as part of the Career Prep System in overall curricula design.
 8. Instructional delivery systems that reflect marketable skill requirements

- Employ principles of adult learning in the design and implementation of instruction.
 - Use state-of-the-art technology and other equipment.
 - Provide for materials and resources necessary and appropriate for effective instruction and training.
 - Provide for experiential, hands-on training appropriate to the vocational area.
 - Provide for job counseling.
9. Uniform standards for assessment and follow up based on national models
- Monitor and document student progress and program completion effectively.
 - Document number of program completers.
 - Obtain follow-up information on employment placement after release.

Michigan Department of Corrections

Education Action Plan: 1995
Revised, Phase II: 2000

Education Action Plan – Phase III



October 1, 2004 – September 30, 2007

Revised by the MDOC Education Steering Committee

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INTRODUCTION

The Education Action Plan Phase III is a strategic framework for the consistent, cost-effective delivery of educational programming. This document provides an overview of prison education and a specific plan of action to address educational priorities for the plan period.

Public Act 320 of 1998 requires prisoners to obtain a GED, with some exemptions, prior to release. Policy Directive 05.02.112 “Education Programs for Prisoners” ensures accountability, provides dynamic leadership for continually improving education strategy, and outlines the programming and criteria for prisoners to receive these educational services.

Prisoner education plays a critical role in the implementation of the Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative (MPRI) and the Prison Build Program. The Department continues to implement strategies gleaned from expert input and to develop collaborative partnerships with other organizations including post-secondary schools, Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, Michigan Rehabilitation Services, Michigan Works!, and the Michigan Department of Education. As a vital component of the MPRI, all educational programming is designed to maximize a prisoner’s skills for successful community reentry.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the MDOC Prisoner Education system is to facilitate the transition from prison to the community by assisting prisoners in the development of their academic, workplace, and social competencies through effective and cost-efficient programs.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Each prisoner's academic and vocational achievements, aptitudes, and interests will be assessed and verified. Based on these assessments, counseling, and verifications, prison schools administer the following programs:

- Academic – Adult Basic Education (ABE), GED Preparation (GED), and English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Special Education (SPEC ED)
- Career and Technical Education (CTE) (formerly called Vocational Education)
- Transition Life Skills (TLS) – including employability, social and life skills (formerly called Pre-release)
- Specialized grant-funded programs

It is the focus of prisoner education to prepare prisoners for successful reentry into the community while addressing prisoner needs (barriers), aptitudes, and interests. All education programs incorporate workplace, communication, and social skills training.

Education Assessment and Guidance

During the reception process, diagnostic assessments are completed which determine each prisoner's educational development in accordance with PD 04.01.104 "Reception Center Services" and PD 05.02.112 "Education Programs for Prisoners". Based on the assessments and counseling, an education program plan will be developed by school and program staff with prisoner input. All efforts will be made through the classification process to ensure prisoners are placed at facilities that provide programming required in his/her education program plan.

The following educational needs provide guidelines for prison placement:

- Academic (GED/HS Diploma) – Eligible prisoners will be sent to a prison offering academic programming.

- Special Education – Eligible prisoners must be sent to a designated Special Education center. Special education programming for eligible prisoners is required by law. Appropriate prison placement is mandatory.
- English as a second language (ESL) – Eligible prisoners will be sent to a designated ESL center.
- Career and Technical – to the extent possible, prisoners will be sent to a facility offering the vocational program(s) identified through his/her vocational assessment (CareerScope) and a review of the prisoner’s prior training and/or employment.
- Transition – All facilities offer this programming and all prisoners will have an opportunity to participate at the appropriate time in their sentence.

Academic

The Department will provide academic programming through a flexible schedule offering open entry/open exit. Prison security level, classroom space, prisoner transfers, and staffing can impact program availability and completion rates. Facilities designated as Academic Centers concentrate available resources and focus on academic education. School principals will ensure classroom enrollment is optimized and waiting lists are kept to a minimum so each prisoner can achieve educational goals as efficiently and economically possible. Special accommodations will be provided for prisoners as appropriate.

It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that school procedures include establishment of clearly defined educational goals and proper documentation of prisoner progress.

Every effort will be made to ensure each prisoner paroled with an educational minimum of a GED. However, a prisoner impacted by PA-320 who has not completed a GED prior to his/her parole date will be granted a GED Completion Exemption under the “no fault of their own” provision if the following minimum criteria are met and documented:

- 1) regular school attendance at every opportunity within the prior two years
- 2) satisfactory school progress evaluations
- 3) submission of a completed GED Completion Exemption form (CAJ-798) and administrative approval

English as a Second Language (ESL) is offered at designated centers for prisoners for whom English is not their native language and who are functioning below the 5th grade

level in reading. School principals will work with facility transfer coordinators to arrange transfer to an ESL center if a prisoner is determined to need ESL services.

Title I programming is a federally-funded educational enforcement program for prisoners who are under the age of 22, read below the 8.0 grade level, and who have not earned a high school diploma or GED. Eligible prisoners must be enrolled for a minimum of 15 class hours per week which may include a combination of academic and vocational programming in order to ensure optimal Title I funding. Title I support services are available at a limited number of facilities.

Special Education

In accordance with federal law, a prisoner who is eligible to receive Special Education services must be placed in class within ten calendar days. Special Education programming is provided as required by the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), MDOC Special Education Plan, and PD 05.02.114 "Special Education". If a prisoner under age 22 is potentially eligible to receive special education services, school principals must work with transfer coordinators to ensure the prisoner is transferred to a Special Education Center and placed in class in accordance with PD 05.02.114 (SEE SPECIAL EDUCATION PLAN). Assistance to ensure compliance is to be requested from the Education Manager as necessary.

Vocational Counseling

Prisoner interest, aptitude testing, and vocational counseling will be provided to each prisoner prior to placement in CTE programming. School principals will ensure every effort is made to match the programming placement to each prisoner's interests, abilities, and past experiences.

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

CTE programs provide the prisoner with training in technical skills and workplace competencies. These include marketable job and employability skills critical to finding and maintaining employment. The department provides CTE programming in a flexible schedule offering open entry/open exit. Prison security level, classroom space, prisoner transfer, and staffing can impact program availability, and completion rates. Facilities designated as CTE Centers concentrate available resources and focus on career and technical education. School principals will ensure classroom enrollment is optimized and waiting lists are kept to a minimum so a prisoner can achieve vocational skills as quickly and economically as possible.

Class size for each CTE program will be determined by guidelines established by the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth. Each CTE program will have a core technical training component, an approved progress plotter, and a projected

number of hours for completion. Upon completion of the course requirements, the approved MDOC CTE certificate will be issued which will include information on skill areas mastered.

It is the expectation that all CTE programs will:

- afford eligible students the opportunity to acquire and develop necessary job skills and aptitudes for meaningful, long-term employment
- offer state or national certification upon completion
- have economical start up and operational costs
- require less than a year to complete
- involve community/industry input and influence

Technical Programming

School principals will ensure that qualified staff provides the following technical training components: (exceptions based on security level may be approved by the Education Manager)

- assessment/evaluation/counseling
- computer literacy
- technical mathematics
- employment search/research using the Michigan Occupational Information System (MOIS)
- applied skills
- approved core curriculum and trade area (e.g. Auto Mechanics, Building Trades, Business Education Technology)

Completion of a technical training component will be recorded as part of the prisoner's CTE program goals, but not as a CTE completion. A prisoner within three years of earliest release date who has a high school diploma or GED will be given priority for placement in CTE programming if he/she has not previously completed an MDOC CTE program. A prisoner whose earliest release date is within the year will be eligible for general workplace skills training placement, including computer literacy training.

Special institutional and community projects provide prisoners the opportunity to demonstrate hands-on skills by offering invaluable job-related training and restorative justice opportunities. This is a cost-effective method to supplement classroom experiences through community service. School principals are to ensure that all special projects are consistent with the CTE curriculum, educational goals, and specific prisoner training needs.

Career and Technical Education is an integral component of the Prison Build program. It is the intent of related CTE programs to support Prison Build activities while maintaining a focus on the completion of the core curricula requirements.

Transition Skills

Transition programming provides prisoners an opportunity to participate in workplace employment, life skills, and other appropriate community reentry programming. Vocational assessment may be conducted as part of this programming. Completion/mastery of all skills listed on the plotter for Transitional Skills meets the criterion of the pre-release program requirement and the Michigan prisoner reentry initiative goals. Transitional programming begins during the intake process and progresses through release to assist the prisoner in working toward completion of his/her individual educational goal(s) and preparing for success in the community. Community and facility resources will be used whenever feasible. The transition program will provide opportunities for the prisoner to develop and apply skills in both educational and employment situations. Prisoners will receive basic computer literacy training as a component of pre-release. Each prisoner will be provided with the opportunity to participate in transition programming and develop a portfolio within one year of scheduled community reentry.

Facilities are encouraged to involve available staff, including non-teaching staff, in the delivery of various transitional skill programming components. The school is responsible for coordinating transitional programming and reporting participation in the transitional skills program.

Supplemental Programming

Correspondence Courses - Prisoners will be permitted to enroll in correspondence courses as set forth in PD 05.02.119 "Correspondence Courses". The coursework must comply with the policy requirements. If requested by the prisoner, a verified copy of the transcript or certificate of completion will be placed in the prisoner's school file.

Prison Build – This is a supplemental program to provide building components and landscaping plants to nonprofit organizations such as the Habitat for Humanity. It employs qualified prisoners who have successfully completed specified CTE programming.

Youthful Offender Program - This is a grant funded program for prisoners under the age of 26 who will be returning to their communities within five years. It is facilitated through partnerships with accredited post-secondary schools and other agencies. This is offered at designated facilities.

SUMMARY

This Education Plan Phase III will be reviewed at least annually by the Education Steering Committee and revised as appropriate. A Phase IV plan will be developed including new goals no later than September 30, 2007.

Approval:

PATRICIA L. CARUSO, Director, Michigan Department of Corrections

DENNIS M. STRAUB, Deputy Director, Correctional Facilities Administration

DEBRA L. SCUTT, Operations Manager, Correctional Facilities Administration

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Julie L. DeRose, Education Manager, Chair
Lee McKenzie, School Principal SCF
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Michele Dick, School Principal WHV
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Section 1007(2)(a-g)

Department Plans for Academic and Vocational Programs

- August 2005 Performance Audit Response

Section 1007(2)(a)

General Education Development Program Coordination and Best Practices

The Department's Education Steering Committee and its curriculum committees continue to review and discuss the most appropriate and effective delivery of GED programming. Practices determined to be best practices are piloted or implemented statewide. Potential best practices are referred to the committees by school principals. In addition, the school audit process which involves on-site reviews of each facility at least every three years by a team of experienced educators provides an opportunity to identify potential best practices as well as undesired or ineffective practices that should be eliminated.

It is important to note that not all best practices can be implemented at each facility. Space, staffing, and security issues make it difficult to achieve uniform implementation of certain practices.

The Education office has developed the process to refer "best practice" ideas to committees for implementation. This was presented to Academic teachers as well during the 2004-05 Academic Teacher Professional Development in-service. Additionally, this practice of solving/sharing best practices will continue as part of the annual Academic Teachers Professional Development.

Additional Action:

Examples of further improvement include:

- Realignment of the curriculum and steering committees to provide new insight and direction in program development.
- Enrollment guidelines established in accordance with best practices identified during school audits.
- Provided "posters" regarding essay writing to all schools.
- Identified "Fast Track" software to address academic deficiencies. Anticipate piloting in 2006.

Section 1007(2)(b)

Prisoner Education Files

The Department has implemented a new database system called the Offender Education Tracking System (OETS). OETS records the classes that each prisoner completed or was enrolled in. It also contains a monitoring module to assist in ensuring that educational program plans and quarterly and final evaluations have been completed for each prisoner. OETS will also assist in providing timely educational programming information to receiving institutions upon transfer of prisoners as receiving institutions now have access to prisoner education information even if the physical file has not yet arrived.

The Department also developed a school principal and secretary manual and provided training to principals and school secretaries to improve compliance with recordkeeping requirements. School secretaries and principals are required to ensure the completeness of prisoner education files prior to transfer and to forward prisoner education files within five business days of transfer.

Additional Action:

In addition, the Department is reviewing its education program recordkeeping requirements to eliminate maintenance of any redundant or unnecessary information.

The Education Section worked with the Office of Research and Planning to develop queries from OETS to monitor transfer of files and appropriate data entry into OETS. Follow-up was conducted to correct all discrepancies found.

The facilities were instructed to notify our office if files are not received in a timely fashion.

Section 1007(2)(c)
Performance Indicators

The Department only agreed with this finding in part: The Department had developed some performance indicators to evaluate the effectiveness of the prisoner education program but acknowledges that it can further improve the performance evaluation process.

The school audit process which involves on-site reviews of each facility at least every three years by a team of experienced educators includes evaluation of several performance indicators or factors. The FY 2003 pre-established school audit factors included: minimum GED completions for the year are at least 20% of the September 30 enrollment and, minimum CTE core program completions for the year are at least 20% of September enrollment. The FY 2001 pre-established school audit factors included: the number of students passing the GED test increased 5% when compared to the prior year and, the number of students passing the core component of each CTE program increased 5% when compared to the prior year. The results of the audits are used to identify needed changes in practice or curriculum.

In addition, pilot programs have been established in various facilities. Data is gathered and recommendations are made based on the data. The recommendations are forwarded to the Education Steering Committee and curriculum committees for appropriate action.

The Department agrees that it can further improve the process by which it gathers and analyzes educational data as a basis to establish additional relevant performance indicators and to identify needed program changes. The Department has implemented a new database system called the Offender Education Tracking System (OETS). OETS will allow the Department to more efficiently and effectively capture and analyze educational data.

In addition, in FY 2002, the Department of Labor and Economic Growth began requiring reporting of performance data into the Michigan Adult Education Reporting System. This system allows measurement of indicators such as educational gain, student retention, and goal attainment. The Department will also use this data to establish additional relevant performance indicators and to identify needed program changes.

Additional Action:

All schools are audited for completion rates and audit factors that establish performance will be reviewed to further increase required results.

Worldwide Instructional Design System (WIDS) software was purchased to establish nationally recognized outcomes based curriculum. Software has been applied to 3 vocational programs to date. Educational gains are measured through TABE testing. A conversion to TABE 9 & 10 in accordance with Department of Labor and Economic Growth requirements and new testing frequency was implemented.

Section 1007(2)(d) **Pre-Release Programs**

It should be noted that the Education program was not responsible for pre-release programming during the audit period. However, in December 2003, a standardized pre-release program was developed for education staff at facilities through the Michigan Prisoner Re-entry Initiative with input from the Education Vocational Training and Employment Committee. Facility education staff received training for the program and will receive updated training on a periodic basis. Facility education staff have also been instructed to provide pre-release programming within one year of their earliest release date.

Section 1007(2)(e) **Prisoner Education Policies and Procedures**

Steps have been taken to improve standardization of educational programming. Although there is a need for some additional instruction or procedures, standardization can be best achieved through implementation of automated systems and monitoring of procedures. The Student Database was replaced in July 2004 with a networked database called the Offender Education Tracking System (OETS). OETS together with the Offender Management Callout System which is currently being implemented statewide will provide the department with accurate attendance information as facility school attendance will be linked to the facilities' prisoner count process. OETS along with the development of the principal and school secretary manual and training will assist the Department in maintaining standard core completion data. It should be noted that the Department had identified the problem with recording supplemental completions incorrectly during school audits. Because students work in both textbooks and on the computer, instructors are required to record student progress on standardized progress plotters which record the dates and scores of each achievement. Principals have been instructed to ensure that students' progress is monitored and documented. Cell study and the use of substitute teachers have been eliminated.

A review of Education positions and department policies impacting Education was completed in May, 2005. A school secretary's manual was developed and distributed to better ensure consistency in processes. Additionally, school teacher and school principal manuals are completed and standardized to provide guidelines for policy and procedure implementation. Additional policies/procedures will be developed as the need is identified by the Education Steering Committee.

Additional Action:

Established a committee to review all department policies and procedures and impact on education. Appropriate revision recommendations are ongoing.

School secretary, school principal, and teachers manuals have been developed as a means of consistent communication and as receptacles for pertinent documents to be used as reference.

Standardized priority for enrollment has been established.

Section 1007(2)(f)

Use of Educational Program Resources

The department agrees with the recommendation but does not agree with the auditors' use of exhibit 1 and 2 to imply that some facilities were more efficient than others.

The wide variation in cost per educational program completion is a result of many factors. For example, because educational program completions include both GED completions and CTE completions, facilities with highly active CTE programs generally have a lower average cost per completion. This is because CTE programs can generally be completed within a few months while GED completions generally take many months and in some cases years for prisoners to achieve. In addition, some facilities' expenditures such as the Robert Scott Correctional Facility included start up costs due to facility conversion. Further, the cost per completion methodology used by the auditors does not recognize that most prisoners' beginning education levels are equivalent to elementary school levels and some facilities have a much higher percentage of elementary education level prisoners than other facilities. The auditors' cost analysis recognizes no benefit for educational gain short of GED or CTE completion. Some facilities offer special education programs while others do not. The auditors' cost analysis recognizes no benefit for special education programming. Facilities that provide educational programming to high security prisoners also face challenges in terms of security requirements and prisoner behavior that contribute to higher costs. Facility education costs can also be impacted by other variables such as the average age of a facility's population, or higher concentrations of certain population types due to other programs offered by the facility.

It is important to note that the Department served a minimum of 12,000 prisoners during each of the fiscal years. Using expenditure and enrollment data for FY 2003, the average cost per GED and CTE enrollment was approximately \$2,600 per student.

The Department is, however, cognizant of the need to deliver educational programs in the most efficient manner possible throughout the Department. Therefore, the Department will comply with the recommendation by measuring and comparing costs or resources expended to achieve completions or achievements on a program by program basis. The Department's new Offender Education Tracking System (OETS) will allow the Department to more effectively obtain data to perform such an analysis. The analysis will be used to assist the Department in identifying and replicating efficient educational processes as well as identifying and resolving barriers that hinder program efficiency.

A barrier to completions and efficiency is the Prisoner Transfer and Security Systems. It is significant to note that the continuous movement of prisoners between and even within prisons impacts the ability to maintain constant enrollment and therefore, completion rate. The Auditors approach of comparing program to program and school to school contradicts the vision of coordinating and standardizing prison school activities, budgets, resources, etc. to establish a system of education instead of single, isolated schools. The system approach is the solution to ensuring continuity of education and increased efficiency in response to the significant number of transfers/student turn over/parole returns.

Additional Action:

Memos are distributed to ensure that education resources are used for prisoner education and not other activities.

Section 1007(2)(g)
Maximization of Federal Funding

The OETS system will assist the Department by providing better data to maximize federal funding. The Department has also hired grant-funded student interns to assist with data collection. In addition, the Education Section and curriculum committees will continue to review grant availability and eligibility.

With this additional staff, the MDOC is currently maximizing its ability to get Federal Funds. It should also be noted that the Strategic Planning and Research Administration recently hired a grant coordinator. Grant amounts for Special Education and Title I have increased due to improved reporting practices.

Additional Action:

A student assistant was hired (grant-funded) in the Education Section and the student is required to regularly check appropriate websites for grant availability. This is in the job description. Information found is forwarded to Education Manager and or Office of Re-Entry. A Special Education Consultant and Department Specialist were also added to the Prisoner Education office.

Additional Action:

Inmate Keyboard Training - This expansion has occurred at most facilities. It is a goal to ensure that all prisoners received computer intro/keyboarding prior to parole. This will be in addition to pre-release programming. This is already established at the re-entry facilities. Software has been upgraded since first purchased so this expansion will result in increased cost to standardize.