NDTAC PRACTICE GUIDE:

Quality Education Services Are Critical for Youth Involved With the Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Systems

Simon Gonsoulin
Heather Griller Clark
Victoria E. Rankin

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Preface

In May 2010, the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform (CJJR) at Georgetown University released the monograph "Addressing the Unmet Educational Needs of Children and Youth in the Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Systems" (Leone & Weinberg). A revised version of the monograph was released in 2012. The monograph examines a number of topics relevant to the education and experiences of youth in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, and "crossover youth" who find themselves at some point in their lives involved with both systems. The authors review issues concerning, and provide information about, youth whose educational needs have been inadequately addressed by the agencies responsible for meeting some of these youth's other pressing needs. The monograph serves as a source of information for policymakers and practitioners interested in improving education services for these vulnerable youth. It examines challenges faced by these youth, barriers to providing effective services for them, and the policies and practices of several jurisdictions that have attempted to meet their unique needs. The monograph concludes with a discussion of principles and the design of systems "to serve these youth and ensure they experience more positive outcomes in school and ultimately, in the community as young adults" (p. 8).

In partnership with CJJR, the National Evaluation and Technical Assistance Center for the Education of Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk (NDTAC) has developed a series of practice guides that build on the monograph by providing the field with concrete strategies for adopting the principles and practices discussed in the document. The strategies were developed by NDTAC and draw from the experiences of the authors and are supported by general research. NDTAC and CJJR hope that these guides provide administrators and practitioners in juvenile justice, child welfare, and beyond with the "how-to's" they need to achieve the type of comprehensive system envisioned by the CJJR monograph.

This NDTAC practice guide examines the principle that quality education services are critical for youth involved with the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. This principle asserts that, to address the many hardships that may affect a youth's educational outcomes—trauma, changes in placement, family mobility, disabling conditions, economic disadvantage, involvement in the justice system—educators need to provide high-quality education services to provide a counterbalance to these challenges. Education is a protective factor for youth who are system involved and can help prevent future delinquency and crime. "Education is the foundation for successful life experiences" (Leone & Weinberg, 2012, p. 48). High-quality education can help foster positive outcomes for system-involved youth by addressing their unique needs, overcoming past negative educational experiences. It has long been known that child-serving agencies, whether education or agencies operating child and youth services, need to provide youth under their care quality education services comparable to those received by nonsystem-involved youth. To do otherwise is unacceptable.

Introduction

Young people who are involved in the juvenile justice and/or child welfare system face many barriers to achieving their full potential and short- and long-term positive outcomes. Factors such as poverty, mobility, substance abuse, school failure, and mental health issues constitute some of the barriers impeding the availability of knowledge, resources, and supports to make good decisions that affect and improve their future. Quality education services are critical to the success of all youth, and "youth in the juvenile delinquency and foster care system, perhaps more so than other youth, need high-quality education services to make successful transitions from adolescence to adulthood" (Leone & Weinberg, 2010, p. 7). If educational opportunities and the quality of those opportunities are inadequate, the likelihood of a youth achieving and overcoming barriers may be lessened, no matter the educational setting.

Programs funded under Title I, Part D of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA), as well as other Federal, State, and local programs, can have a positive effect on education services and ultimately a youth's academic achievement. One of the goals of programs under Title I, Part D is to "level the playing field" for youth who are neglected, delinquent, or at risk of academic failure, dropping out of school, or entering or reentering the child welfare or juvenile justice systems. In particular, Title I, Part D funds and programming are designed to:

- Improve education services for children and youth who are neglected or delinquent

- Ensure that youth who are neglected or delinquent have the opportunity to meet the same challenging State academic standards that all children are expected to meet

- Provide children and youth who are neglected or delinquent with the services needed to make successful transitions from institutions to schools and/or employment

- Prevent youth who are at risk of academic failure from dropping out of school

- Provide children and youth who have dropped out of school, or who are returning to school after residing in an institution, with a support system to ensure their continued education

This and previous NDTAC practice guides are based on the six overarching principles found in "Addressing the Unmet Educational Needs of Children and Youth in the Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Systems" (Leone & Weinberg, 2012):

1. Quality education services are critical.

2. Early education is essential.

3. Outcomes that matter are measured.

4. Individually tailored support services for youth are provided.

5. Interagency communication and collaboration are vital.

6. Change requires within-agency and cross-agency leadership.

The resulting practices and strategies presented in the NDTAC practice guides are designed to assist child-serving agencies address long-standing barriers and challenges that can overwhelm agencies and the children and families they serve. The practices and strategies range from policy-related recommendations to actionable items that agency leaders and staff, including State coordinators of Title I, Part D programs, can take to ensure better outcomes for youth who are system involved. For instance, it is expected that systems assess the needs of the youth and families they serve; however, assessing need is only the initial step in serving youth and families. It is also essential for agencies and partners to enact policy that dictates practice that ensures identified needs are met to foster more positive outcomes.

Table 1 depicts the practices and strategies of three previous NDTAC practice guides derived from the Leone and Weinberg monograph. These practices and strategies focus attention on the importance of interagency communication and collaboration, providing individually tailored academic and behavioral support services for system-involved youth, and providing opportunities for early learning to address the needs of young children at risk for system involvement. These three guides can be found on the NDTAC Web site at www.neglected-delinquent.org.

Table 1. NDTAC Practice Guide Practices and Strategies

		Strategies
Guide		**Improving Educational Outcomes for Youth in the Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Systems Through Interagency Communication and Collaboration (2011)**
Practices	Practice 1. Engage in Collaborative Decisionmaking	1. Memoranda of understanding (MOU) to share information* 2. Consolidated/single case management and a "no wrong door" approach. 3. Align relevant policies and corresponding practices of child-serving agencies.
	Practice 2. Share Resources and Expertise	1. Co-location of staff. 2. Share databases.† 3. Cross-agency training.
	Practice 3. Target Services To Meet the Needs of Children, Youth, Parents, and Caregivers	1. Engage youth and family as key decisionmakers and assets in determining needed supports and services. 2. Implement evidence-based and best-practice programming that supports individual students' success in school and life.
Guide		**Providing Individually Tailored Academic and Behavioral Support Services for Youth in the Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Systems (2012)**
Practices	Practice 1. Collect and Use Data To Identify Needs and Develop Learning Plans	1. Provide a systematic process for using data to identify needs, screen for indicators of larger issues, monitor outcomes, and make educational decisions. 2. Develop and maintain personalized learning plans (PLPs). 3. Share information across all stakeholders to facilitate students' success and well-being.
	Practice 2. Implement Procedures To Ensure Smooth Transitions	1. Include transition activities in student PLPs. 2. Establish formal mechanisms for the exchange of educational data and records. 3. Prioritize and allocate funds for transition supports and programs. 4. Conduct ongoing monitoring and continuous quality improvement of transition efforts.
	Practice 3. Address Gaps in Academic Skills and Accelerate Learning	1. Base instruction on functional and curriculum-based evaluation of student needs. 2. Provide tiered academic intervention programs. 3. Use explicit, scaffolded instruction.
	Practice 4. Instruct Students in Ways That Engage Them in Learning	1. Personalize the learning environment and instructional content. 2. Build conditions and opportunities that demonstrate to students their success. 3. Provide engaging, interactive, and hands-on learning opportunities. 4. Engage youth in decisionmaking regarding education.
	Practice 5. Address Behavioral and Social Needs To Promote Educational Success	1. Manage student behavior with positive rather than punitive approaches. 2. Engage the family to gain greater insight into youth's behavioral needs. 3. Create a structured learning environment. 4. Align behavior management approaches across settings and domains.
Guide		**Early Education Is Essential: Addressing the Needs of Young Children Potentially at Risk of System Involvement (2014)**
Practices	Practice 1. Conduct Early Identification of Vulnerable Children	1. Provide effective screening and assessment, including effective use of data for decisionmaking. 2. Ensure coordinated case management, including collaboration with education, health, and mental services.
	Practice 2. Provide Access to Evidence-Based Early Intervention Practices	1. Provide access and exposure to high-quality early childhood education. 2. Implement evidence-based behavior and social development support services. 3. Address health and nutritional needs that affect development.
	Practice 3. Identify and Promote Authentic Family/Caregiver Involvement	1. Implement evidence-based parent/caregiver training and support services. 2. Promote and facilitate family/caregiver collaboration. 3. Facilitate practices that support cultural competency.

*Any disclosure of personally identifiable information from education records must occur under the guidelines of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). All MOUs related to this disclosure must meet FERPA's requirements for written agreements.
†Disclosure of personally identifiable information contained within databases must also adhere to the requirements of FERPA.

This guide adds to the preceding practices and strategies and provides a range of practices and implementation strategies designed to lead to quality education services that support the full development of all youth, especially youth who are system involved.

Education Across Multiple Settings

Students involved in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems receive education services in a wide range of settings, from traditional, nonrestrictive, community-based, public and private schools to highly restrictive residential detention and correctional facilities. Regardless of setting, these youth are generally considered students who are "at-risk."[1] To meet the unique needs of this at-risk population, all schools should provide education services that are of high quality and comparable to the education services of their nonsystem-involved peers. To do so, educators and administrators across all educational settings should be prepared with a comprehensive and coherent set of proven practices for serving students who are at risk.

This guide provides practices and strategies that are suitable for implementation across five categories of educational settings in which youth may be placed. Each is described below and presented from the least to the most restrictive.

Community-Based Traditional and Alternative Schools

Students who are at risk can receive education services in such community-based, nonrestrictive settings as public or private schools. These could be charter or alternative schools or ones that encompass a broad-based student population, such as community high schools. The placement may be within or outside the student's neighborhood or home school district.

In most residential and moderately restrictive school settings, educators understand that all of their students are at risk. However, when students involved with the child welfare and/or juvenile justice systems enter into community schools, especially large comprehensive middle and high schools, educators may not fully understand the needs of this student group and may have limited experience working with these youth. Thus all community schools, including charter and private schools, should be prepared to address

these students' challenges and to help them succeed. It is important for community schools to assimilate students who are at risk into the school culture as quickly as possible while acknowledging the unique challenges they face (Dynarski et al., 2008).

Day Treatment Centers

In many ways, day treatment centers (DTCs), whether for youth in the child welfare or juvenile justice systems or youth involved with other child-serving systems, are similar to many alternative schools. Although alternative schools may have a focus on students who experience discipline problems or serve gifted students, DTCs, as the name implies, typically operate to serve students with mental and/or behavioral health needs that are not easily met by traditional community schools. Students may attend DTCs for various lengths of time to address both acute and chronic needs and may do so voluntarily or under order of a juvenile or family court. Although treatment in DTCs is focused on helping students overcome challenges and return to their regular community school, the emphasis on treatment, especially an overemphasis, can pose a challenge to fostering academic success for students in these settings. Time in a DTC, although beneficial to youth's mental well-being, can disrupt their normal educational progress and separate them from their friends and peer groups. It also places them in an environment with other troubled youth, which can have strong adverse effects. Additionally, youth who have attended DTCs may face the stigma of having a mental health need and teasing or bullying from peers once they return to a community school.

Group Homes

Although most youth residing in groups homes receive their education in community-based schools, some attend schools on the grounds of the home. Group homes may be private residences designed or converted to serve as a nonsecure home for unrelated youth who share common needs and characteristics. Although attention to group homes typically focuses on youth in need of foster care, youth in the juvenile justice system may also reside in group homes at some point during their involvement. The educational needs of youth in group homes are not altogether different from those of students who are at risk in traditional community schools. However, in determining how best to address academic, behavioral, and social needs, providers should consider the fact that such youth are isolated from peer groups and family members and other caring adults.

[1] Under Title I, Part D (ESEA section 1432), "[T]he term 'at-risk', when used with respect to a child, youth, or student, means a school aged individual who is at-risk of academic failure, has a drug or alcohol problem, is pregnant or is a parent, has come into contact with the juvenile justice system in the past, is at least 1 year behind the expected grade level for the age of the individual, has limited English proficiency, is a gang member, has dropped out of school in the past, or has a high absenteeism rate at school."

Residential Treatment Centers

Residential treatment centers (RTCs) represent the next level of restrictiveness for placements where students receive education services. RTCs are live-in care facilities providing therapy for substance abuse, mental illness, or other behavioral issues. Youth in both the juvenile justice and child welfare systems may live in an RTC at some point, again voluntarily or by court order; but these facilities are not reserved for only those youth populations. For example, a facility may include youth who need a 24-hour residential program to address their special education needs.

Within RTCs, youth receive a wide range of programs and services in many different types of settings, from self-contained facilities with secure units to campus-based facilities, community-based apartments, and large group "cottages" or "camps." The youth—and sometimes their families—in these placements typically receive a mix of services: counseling, education, recreation, primary care, behavioral health therapy, nutrition, daily living experiences, independent living skills, reunification services, and aftercare services (Child Welfare League of America, 1991). Like DTCs, "residential treatment programs are traditionally organized around a medical model and are intended to be short in duration and high in intensity of treatment, with the goal that youth quickly move to a lower (and less expensive) level of care" (Lee & Barth, 2009).

Like youth educated in group homes, students in RTCs face the same circumstances of receiving education in or around the same environment in which they live. This isolates them not only from their established friends and peer groups but also from their family members and neighbors. There is also some concern that being surrounded only by those in need of mental/behavioral health treatment may have a negative impact on the overall well-being and academic success of youth in RTCs. RTCs are typically small settings with minimal education staff, so ensuring the quality of instruction and adherence to Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) required for students eligible for special education services and other education plans is critical. Also important while youth reside in an RTC is ensuring some level of connectedness between youth and their family members, other caring adults, and pro-social peers.

Detention and Correctional Facilities

A final setting where system-involved youth may receive education services is in a detention or correctional setting. Youth in these residential secure-care placements typically have higher rates of school suspension and/or expulsion than their nonsystem-involved peers (Sedlak & Bruce, 2010), are more likely to have literacy and numeracy skills below grade level than their age-equivalent peers, and are three times more likely to have educational disabilities compared to nonsystem-involved youth (Leone & Weinberg, 2012).

"Detention" usually refers to placement in a secure facility under delinquent or criminal court authority at some point between the time of intake and referral to court (predispositional), and following case disposition, or "sentencing" (postdispositional). The reasons for postdispositional detention generally include awaiting subsequent placement, short-term sentencing to detention, or being a danger to self or others (OJJDP, n.d.).

Because detention is typically a short-term stay—on average 14 days, although it may be much longer for some youth—it is usually impossible to "plug" a youth into a prescribed curriculum that is specially designed for him or her. Instead, having a short-term curriculum designed to address major/core skill areas found in the public school curriculum is advisable. The general overarching purposes of education programming in detention are to screen for disabilities, gather data to inform future education planning, and reengage the youth in the education process.

"Corrections" usually refers to larger scale secure-care facilities to which youth who have been adjudicated delinquent are committed for periods generally ranging from a few months to several years. Often juvenile correctional facilities are funded and/or operated by State juvenile justice agencies and tend to have a more robust array of services as compared to detention facilities, mainly because of length of stay.

For youth who find themselves in correctional facilities, education services usually accompany other rehabilitative practices and typically include academic instruction, vocational/career technical training, and/or social skills training. Many facilities offer a full continuum of academic services, including traditional course work that leads to a GED credential or high school diploma, and the ability to earn postsecondary credits. Career and technical education courses are often also available based on current labor trends in the area. The curriculum typically follows a "State-established" career and technical education course outline and should not be implemented solely for the purpose of "doing the work of the facility." Efforts are usually made to ensure that all content, activities, and course work completed in a correctional school setting are aligned with State and/or district school guidelines to ensure the greater likelihood that work completed while a youth is confined will transfer to the youth's next educational placement.

Quality Education Services in Practice

For educators and their partners—parents, mental health providers, substance abuse counselors, court personnel—to address the unique needs of youth who are involved in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems, education services and related policies and practices must be of high quality. These education services should be comparable across all

settings in which youth who are system involved receive education services. Continuity of services also should be across all educational settings. Youth involved in juvenile justice and child welfare can transition many times during the school year and throughout their education. Comparable and continuous education services should also be appropriate for each setting. Although most of the practices and strategies in this and other NDTAC practice guides are applicable across settings, the implementation of each should be tailored to fit the individual setting and may be more difficult in some settings than others. Finally, all settings need to ensure high levels of accountability and elevate education to a high level of importance. Table 2 presents the four practices and their supporting strategies for this guide.

Table 2. Practices and Strategies Presented in This Practice Guide

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2"></th><th>Strategies</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Practices</td><td>Practice 1. Implement principles that impact teacher and learner outcomes</td><td>1. Recruit and retain credentialed teachers and administrators qualified to work with a student population that is at high risk of dropping outImplement a systematic and rigorous evaluation process
2. Provide professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators based on staff and student needs
3. Promote and nurture staff with demonstrated effectiveness in engaging and connecting with youth</td></tr>
<tr><td>Practice 2. Instruct students in a manner that prepares them for productive citizenship and decisionmaking in the future</td><td>1. Offer a rigorous and relevant curriculum that establishes high-level goals with formal and informal assessments.
2. Provide education opportunities comparable to those provided for nonsystem-involved peers
3. Provide access to postsecondary programming</td></tr>
<tr><td>Practice 3. Implement effective transitional practices and services</td><td>1. Implement "best practices" for transition that promote success in education
2. Establish practices to ensure family engagement in decisions about education
3. Establish specific policies to ensure meaningful cross-agency collaboration and communication designed to promote quality education services</td></tr>
<tr><td>Practice 4. Implement policies and practices that prioritize quality education services that meet the unique needs of youth who are system involved</td><td>1. Require timely exchange of information/records (information sharing)
2. Use comprehensive needs-sensing and data collection and analysis to design individualized learning pathways
3. Provide dedicated and adequate funding that facilitates and supports learning</td></tr>
</table>

Practice 1: Implement Practices That Impact Teacher and Learner Outcomes

Students who are at risk of academic difficulty or failure, especially those who are involved with the child welfare or juvenile justice systems, often have had poor experiences with education. Many have been moved from one school to another, perhaps as often as several times during a school year. The consequences of this mobility are far reaching. As is the case with all students, youth who are system involved benefit greatly from placement in an educational environment staffed with highly effective, qualified, and caring professionals with whom they can develop positive relationships. The Title I, Part D statute underscores the importance of qualified staff and teachers for youth who are system involved. For example, State agencies receiving funds under Subpart 1 must provide appropriate professional development to teachers and other staff (see ESEA section 1414(c)(10)). Moreover, both State agency (SA) programs and locally operated correctional facilities receiving Subpart 2 funds under Title I, Part D must ensure that educators are trained to work with students with special needs (see ESEA sections 1414(c)(17) and 1425(5)). To ensure this type of placement for these youth, agencies at both the State and local levels should first establish criteria that define what constitutes "highly effective," "qualified," and "caring" professional staff. Parameters should be set for hiring and retaining staff, ongoing evaluation of staff effectiveness, and targeted training to improve instruction and classroom management. Research has shown that teacher effectiveness is the most important determinant of student success (Holdheide, 2011; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005; Rockoff, 2004); therefore, the highest priority should be given to implementing processes for finding and keeping educators and administrators whose skills, training, and compassion make them best suited to positively affect the lives of students who are system involved.

Strategy 1: Recruit and retain credentialed educators and administrators with demonstrated effectiveness working with students at high risk of dropping out

To create educational settings that ensure positive academic, behavioral, emotional, and social outcomes for students involved or at risk of involvement in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, agencies and schools should make provisions to recruit and retain administrative, teaching, and support staff who demonstrate/have demonstrated effectiveness in educational settings. To do so, agencies should establish stringent hiring practices that require potential candidates to complete a thorough interview process. Administrator and educator candidates should present credentials, such as certificates and résumés, identifying them as qualified and effective (based on benchmarks established by individual jurisdictions and States). Additionally, potential staff should be able to demonstrate effectiveness through a detailed portfolio that outlines past accomplishments including, but not limited to: sample lesson and curriculum plans, teacher-made assessments, professional references, sample student work, and other information supporting the individual's impact on student achievement in past positions.

In recruiting the best staff, effort always should be made to match potential candidates with the greatest needs of the youth. For teachers of youth who are at-risk, this means looking for individuals who are caring, sensitive, and who also have high expectations for students and know the strategies needed to help students who may have disabilities or academic struggles. Beyond their expertise as educators and administrators, candidates should also be able to understand the barriers faced by youth who are system involved and be aware of and provide resources to overcome these barriers. In addition, consistent with certain requirements under Title I, Part D,[2] staff and teachers should be qualified to address the unique needs of youth who are system involved, including those with disabilities.

Although recruiting qualified and effective educators and administrators is crucial to ensuring success for youth who are system involved, retaining effective staff is also important. Doing so helps create a consistent positive atmosphere for students who may have had little consistency in their lives. Further, retaining effective staff who understand how to work with youth from different cultures and circumstances and who work well together as colleagues, with school leaders, and with parents and students is also important.

Successful retention of staff not only occurs when educators and administrators feel that their professional needs are being met but also by working in an environment that is conducive to learning and promotes the well-being of students and staff. Also, school environments that value diversity, uphold high standards for all students, provide for equitable salaries and benefits for educators and administrators, and promote opportunities for staff to grow professionally and contribute to leadership and decisions regarding education may promote retention of education staff.

Once the groundwork for retention has been laid, recruitment as necessitated by normal attrition—because of retirement, promotion, and relocation—should become easier because candidates will see the environment created as a desirable place to work.

Strategy 2: Implement a systematic and rigorous staff evaluation process

Title I, Part D State coordinators are aware of the requirement under ESEA section 1431 that each SA or local educational agency (LEA) that receives funds under Subpart 1 or 2 must conduct a periodic evaluation of the Title I, Part D program. Given the legislative mandate to evaluate programs under Title I, Part D, it makes sense to include educators and administrators in the continuous program improvement process (although it is not a legal requirement of the statute), particularly considering the link between both principals' and teachers' to students' academic success (Seashore Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010).

Part of creating a desirable work environment involves evaluation and using evaluative data to contribute in positive, rather than punitive, ways to improving school and student outcomes. In many instances, educators and administrators who work with students in the child welfare and/or juvenile justice systems may face greater challenges than those encountered by peers outside those systems. Therefore, establishing a fair, insightful assessment of student progress in connection with efforts of individual teachers and administrators will not only yield useful data, but also will ensure that those participating see the process as an opportunity to recognize effectiveness and further develop skills. A number of resources are available to administrators in systems that are working toward implementing and/or improving administrator/teacher evaluation systems. One such resource is the interactive online "Teacher Evaluation Practical Guide" (Center on Great Teachers and Leaders, 2014). The U.S. Department of Education's (ED's) "School Turnaround Learning Community" (STLC) (STLC, 2015) also provides resources and examples in the following areas:

- Selecting evaluation measures

- Training educators and evaluators on the new system

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[2] For example, ESEA section 1425(b) provides that locally operated correctional facilities receiving Subpart 2 funds must "work to ensure that the correctional facility is staffed with teachers and other qualified staff who are trained to work with children and youth with disabilities taking into consideration the unique needs of such children and youth."

- Sustaining stakeholder engagement in evaluation reform

- Ensuring data integrity and transparency

- Using evaluation results

The degree of autonomy afforded facilities and schools that work with youth who are system involved will influence how staff evaluation procedures are established, implemented, and integrated into the overall plan for student success. Regardless of whether the evaluation procedures and instruments from the local public education system are used or whether separate agency- or site-specific procedures and instruments are developed, multiple measures of administrator and educator effectiveness should be included. In "Teacher Evaluation 2.0," the New Teacher Project (2010) suggests that evaluations should be done annually, be based on clear and rigorous expectations, include a system with multiple ratings, provide feedback for the staff member being evaluated, and be used as a determinant for job retention (The New Teacher Project, 2010).

Overall, when developing staff evaluation procedures, agencies and schools should consider (1) staff and student feedback, including the responsiveness of educators to the needs of youth who are system involved; (2) collective bargaining agreements between agencies and teacher unions; and (3) the impact of evaluation results on job retention, salaries, and promotions.

Strategy 3: Provide professional development opportunities for educators and administrators based on staff and student needs

An important component of effective education programs mentioned in the STLC is training and professional development.[3] According to the STLC, such professional development may promote opportunities for professional consultation and discourse regarding students' academic, behavioral, emotional, or social barriers, as identified through formal and informal assessments that should be addressed with innovative, effective strategies as well as milestones achieved by students. Establishing professional learning communities (PLCs) affords both administrators and educators the opportunity to meet on a consistent basis to review the implementation and effectiveness of curriculum, as well as student progress. Furthermore, the PLCs promote effective planning for professional development, data analysis, strategic thinking, discussions, and, ultimately, decisionmaking. Such discussions should be held frequently and at various levels—among administrators and educators, among the whole faculty, by grade level and/or subject area.

Such discussions provide staff with a chance to assess their own performance by talking with peers about what and how they teach or supervise. The environment created in such PLCs should be nonjudgmental and supportive; it should be a way for professional colleagues to learn from one another.

STLC goes on to share that professional development requires securing the knowledge of outside experts to help administrators and educators grow professionally. Opportunities for professional growth may be accomplished through access to a network of experts in various fields via professional literature, guest speakers, mentors, Webinars, and classes. Such professional development should not, however, be done haphazardly to simply satisfy an agency mandate to conduct meetings at regular intervals. Unless those in attendance can connect the knowledge they gain to a real need in their work environment, there is little chance that they will use the knowledge. Agencies and schools should use student assessment data, teacher surveys, and research findings about youth in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems (e.g., using trauma-informed approaches, accelerating learning, and transitional practices) to help determine which topics to include in yearly professional development plans. In addition, administrators and educators should have the opportunity to develop annual individualized professional development plans that could be used as a component of their evaluation plan.

The Title I, Part D statute does not specifically address the potential use of funds for professional development. To the extent otherwise consistent with the allowable uses of funds permitted under the statute,[4] however, Title I, Part D funds may be used to support the reasonable and necessary costs of a variety of education services, which may include professional development for teachers and other staff members that support the Title I, Part D program. To the extent that Title I, Part D funds are used for professional development, such use should be consistent with the State plan or needs assessment and the applicable SA or LEA application.

Strategy 4: Promote and nurture staff with demonstrated effectiveness in engaging and connecting with youth

For administrators and educators who work directly with youth who are system involved to have a positive effect, they must be committed to engaging and connecting with each youth. Research has shown that effective teachers are typically those "who develop relationships with students that are emotionally close, safe, and trusting; who provide access to individual help; and who foster a more general

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[3] The discussion and resources on training and professional development may be found on the STLC Web site under the topic of "supporting teacher recruitment, selection and development" as well as "supporting leader recruitment, selection and development."

[4] For more information regarding allowable uses of Title I, Part D funds, please see sections H (Subpart 1) and O (Subpart 2) of the Title I, Part D Nonregulatory Guidance, available at http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/nord.doc.

ethos of community and caring in classrooms" (Wentzel, 2012). Students, no matter their circumstances, need to feel that the educator in the classroom and the administrator in the school building is an adult who is knowledgeable, will be fair and consistent, and can be counted on to fulfill duties and promises. A willingness to develop these relationships with students implies that administrators and educators are dedicated to "going the extra mile" to help a youth. Students will quickly recognize these efforts on the part of staff and come to the conclusion that the teacher or administrator is a caring adult as demonstrated by the staff asking about the young person's weekend or extended holiday or asking the student who is receiving their education in placement about activities that occurred over the evening or weekend such as an intramural sporting event or a special guest speaker.

Practice 2: Instruct Students in a Manner That Prepares Them for Productive Citizenship and Decisionmaking in the Future

As emphasized in the statute, the primary purpose of Title I, Part D is to ensure that youth who are system involved are given education opportunities comparable to those of their nonsystem-involved peers. Agencies, schools, and staff working with youth in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems must recognize the need to implement a rigorous and relevant curriculum and incorporate personalized learning opportunities that positively affect each youth's education and life outcomes. These personalized learning opportunities may include student-directed learning, learning that addresses specific short- and long-term goals, especially in areas that address deficits and opportunities to acquire skills that promote prosocial interaction or behavior. Curriculum must challenge the youth and engage them throughout the learning process. Further, personalized learning opportunities may increase the likelihood of their engagement. Many students grow accustomed to less challenging courses in elementary school, and succeeding in more rigorous coursework in middle and high school can be difficult for them. So although a rigorous and challenging curriculum is important, it can be counterproductive for some students, especially many who are at risk, if an educator is not prepared to teach with rigor and enrich the learning experience with various teaching and learning modalities that reengage students (McLeod, 2011).

Despite past educational difficulties, youth who are system involved benefit from a curriculum that challenges them to think creatively, to solve problems, and to develop marketable skills. For all students, the process of motivating and engaging them in learning requires full implementation of the curriculum, continuous scrutiny on the part of the teacher,

and opportunities for students to have choices. For example, students may be given a choice of topic areas to research in a science class or a period of history to explore. Successful completion of a challenging curriculum hinges both on the student's ability to access knowledge and resources, using strategies and methods conducive to his or her learning style and on educators' ability to implement curriculum that is personalized and related to a youth's life goals.

Strategy 1: Offer a rigorous and relevant curriculum that establishes high-level goals with formal and informal assessments.

Establishing challenging education goals for youth to be met through personalized learning is important for all students, but especially for youth who are system involved. Many of these students who attend high-poverty and/or low-performing schools may be more likely to fall behind academically (as much as 2 to 3 years behind their nonsystem-involved peers). In an effort to reverse the effects of past challenges and unmet expectations, juvenile justice and child welfare agencies and facilities should implement curricula in mathematics and English language arts for all grade levels based on challenging State academic standards that promote college and career readiness. Working from such standards, school administrators and teaching staff should develop instruction modules that align with the standards. Furthermore, instructional staff may take into account the remediation needs of the youth who are system involved. Preteaching and reteaching approaches may be effective uses of instructional time to help youth who are system involved recover academically to the level of their peers.

In addition to detailing goals and strategies, instructional modules or plans should include formal and informal assessments to keep administrators, educators, parents, and students aware of progress in all areas of the curriculum. In addition to standardized achievement tests, assessment should also include other formal methods, such as end-of-course and teacher-made tests, and informal methods such as rubrics, checklists, student portfolios, presentations, and performance-based measures. For some students who are at risk and historically have not been successful with formal assessments, alternate methods of assessing acquired and retained knowledge can begin to build a student's confidence in his or her ability to reach established goals. A couple of ways to implement alternate methods of assessment might be through the use of portfolios, drawings, oral presentations, and demonstrations. Curriculum-based measures are an alternative assessment method that can guide the realignment of instruction as needed, based on a student's progress (McLane, 2008).

Strategy 2: Provide education opportunities comparable to those provided for nonsystem-involved peers

As previously mentioned, one of the primary purposes of Title I, Part D is to ensure that youth who are system involved are provided education opportunities comparable to those that States provide for youth who are not system-involved. Because a majority of career paths require a high school diploma, a high school equivalency diploma (HSED), or a certificate of general education development (GED), youth who are system involved should be offered opportunities to these diplomas at rates comparable to their peers in community schools. This may require credit recovery and accelerated learning that allows them to make up ground lost because of disruptions in their educational progress for whatever reason (Mallo, 2011). In addition, youth who are at risk need more opportunities for exploring postsecondary options. Students need to work with trained counselors, administrators, and educators to learn about a wide range of postsecondary options that interest them, challenge them, and meet their immediate and long-range goals. For example, students should be afforded the opportunity and encouraged to take interest-inventory tests so that they can learn about their interests and aptitudes and how to translate them into a successful career. The results of such assessments not only identify interests, but they also report on a student's selection of high school credit course work, and preparedness for high school-level course work and/or postsecondary education.

In many cases, the opportunities provided to youth who are system involved can extend beyond the classroom. Internships based on a service-learning model may give students a chance to explore possible career paths and promote an engaged citizenry while learning from individuals with expertise in many fields. Through internships and service- learning, youth who are system involved have a chance not only to develop their own skills but also to "use what they learn in the classroom to solve real-life problems. In this way, they not only learn the practical applications of their studies, but they become active and contributing citizens and community members through the service they perform" (http://gsn-newdemo2. s3.amazonaws.com/documents/1250/original/what-is-service-learning.pdf?1397836188). Such opportunities are more easily provided through a wide network of community contacts and collaborative agreements between agencies and private partners rather than by one school or facility operating alone. Examples of well-known service-learning opportunities that are recognized nationally are fostered by Youth Build America and Habitat for Humanity. There are a number of service learning opportunities at the community level that may focus on improving or creating community parks or neighborhood gardens, beautification of public areas, serving food to individuals who are homeless or live in poverty, and providing supports to children and the elderly.

Strategy 3: Provide access to postsecondary programming and career and technical education training

For students who enter the juvenile justice system with a high school diploma or GED, or for youth who may earn either of these two degrees while in child welfare/juvenile justice placement, they will need to continue their educational endeavors while in placement and upon reentry. To ensure that youth involved in the juvenile justice/child welfare systems are afforded the education programming necessary to promote positive citizenship and grow into productive and contributing young adults, the juvenile justice/child welfare and education agencies must collaboratively determine the best way to provide these youth with postsecondary opportunities and programming. Education programs operating in placement settings should offer a full continuum of education programming that ranges from a traditional high school diploma (GED in some cases), to career and technical education and postsecondary education. These offerings may include online or distance learning offerings provided by a private contractor complimentary to and in combination with face-to-face teacher–student learning opportunities.

The likelihood of improving outcomes for a young person who has a history of justice or child welfare involvement, as with any young person, may be enhanced by achievement in postsecondary education and career preparation. In addition to the rehabilitation mission of juvenile justice systems and the safety mission of child welfare agencies, a goal of these agencies through the administration of challenging programming is to equip young people with the skills that promote successful transition to adulthood. Postsecondary education may motivate youth to overcoming past barriers and the stigma traditionally experienced with systems to achieve life goals similar to and put them on par with nonsystem-involved peers.

According to the 2011 U.S. Census Report, "Education and Synthetic Work Life Earning Estimates," a strong relationship exists between education and earnings. The report indicates that higher levels of education enable individuals access to more specialized jobs that are often associated with higher pay. The report also states that adults with higher levels of education are more likely to be employed full time and year round (Census Bureau, 2011). Thus, the need to ensure that youth in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems have access to and are supported in achieving in postsecondary opportunities is critical for their long-term success.

Practice 3: Implement Effective Transitional Practices and Services

Youth in contact with the child welfare and/or juvenile justice systems experience a tremendous number of transitions in their lives. These transitions can occur at very early ages, during adolescence, or as young adults, and each age requires different approaches to providing supports and services that contribute to positive youth outcomes. Transitions can range from enrolling in many different schools, placement in out-of-home settings, changes in case managers or therapists, and separation from and rejoining family members and caregivers. These transitional periods can be quite difficult for the youth; however, they do not have to be a negative experience if agencies implement transitional practices and services that are specifically and strategically designed for that individual child or youth and focused on success at each next step (Brock, O'Cummings, & Milligan, 2008).

Practitioners, agencies, family members, and caregivers can play important roles in ensuring that transitioning youth's educational needs are addressed at these critical junctures in their lives. Agencies can establish specific policies to ensure relevant cross-agency cooperation and collaboration that eliminates service gaps, fragmentation, and duplication. Practitioners can use recognized best practices, such as rapid exchange of accurate information, the inclusion of family and youth voices in decisionmaking, and beginning reentry planning upon placement to promote the young person's education goals, achievement, and success. Family members and caregivers can be involved in the decisions that affect youth on their journey through successful academic achievement and advocating for the young person. Successful transition requires careful planning from the moment a youth becomes involved with the juvenile justice or child welfare systems and dedicated supports along the way to make each placement or situation as positive as possible.

Strategy 1: Implement "best practices" for transition that promote success in education

Educators can put a number of practices in place to increase the likelihood of successful transition for young people who are system involved. Jurisdictions and practitioners may want to consider three main practices, supported by research on effective education transition practices, to promote better outcomes:

Award course credit. As mentioned in Practice 2, youth who are system involved should be afforded curriculum and opportunities comparable to youth who are nonsystem-involved. If the agency responsible for addressing the educational needs of youth who are system involved provides the same curriculum as public schools and the correctional education program and/or school is accredited like other

schools in the State (and may be designated as a recognized alternative school by the State education agency (SEA)), the facility school should be able to award the course credit just as any other school in the State does. Because of the mobile nature of students who are system involved, community schools should maintain a transcript of progress in courses at all times during the school year in the event the youth must leave school quickly. This transcript should be transferred to the receiving school immediately upon notification, if not before the youth enrolls in the new school. In this way, the receiving school can accept the course credits and ensure appropriate course placement for the student.

Include all youth who are system involved in the State assessment and accountability systems. All too frequently, youth who are system involved are not included in the State assessment and accountability system. For example, this may occur in States where juvenile justice education programs are not under the authority of the SEA. This issue is compounded if the youth has been enrolled in a number of schools during the year. Moreover, holding SAs and/or local school districts accountable for the academic success of system-involved students ensures that the services and supports necessary for such success are sufficiently prioritized or provided. Unless a youth meets the qualifications for a Federal or State exemption, youth must be included in a State's accountability system and participate in State assessments to the same extent as students enrolled in regular public schools regardless of length of stay in their current placement.

Meet all responsibilities to youth with disabilities. Youth who are system involved, and who are suspected of having a disability and in need of special education and related services, must be evaluated under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) within the specified time period applicable in the State, once parental consent for the initial evaluation is obtained. If determined to have a disability, and if parental consent is provided for the initial provision of special education and related services, a youth must have an IEP that meets the requirements of IDEA. For example, under IDEA, an IEP must include, among other requirements:

1. A statement of the youth's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including how the youth's disability affects the youth's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum

2. A statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals, designed to meet the youth's needs that result from the youth's disability to enable the youth to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum

3. The special education and related services and supplementary aids and services to be provided to the

youth, or on behalf of the youth, and the program modifications or supports for school personnel.[5]

Finally, under Title I, Part D, SAs receiving Subpart 1 funds must ensure that they will work with parents to secure their assistance in improving academic achievement and, as appropriate, preventing further involvement in delinquent activities upon reentry (see ESEA section 1414(c)(14)).

Strategy 2: Establish practices to ensure family engagement in decisions about education

It is well established that family members and caregivers have great potential to promote and support positive outcomes for their children (Rutherford, Quinn, Leone, Garfinkle, & Nelson, 2002). In a recent study conducted by the Vera Institute of Justice, researchers found that visitation by family members improved both behavior and academic achievement for youth who were in placement in a secure-care setting (Agudelo, 2013). In addition, reaching out to parents and other caregivers to engage in decisionmaking regarding education, especially in youth with disabilities, is of particular importance as their transitions may be complicated by more barriers than those faced by other youth who are system involved. The evidence is consistent and convincing that families and caregivers have a major influence on their child's achievement in school and throughout life (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). As noted, the Title I, Part D statute (see ESEA sections 1414(c)(14), 1423(8), and 1425(8)) also recognizes the importance of family engagement. To help youth who are system involved achieve positive educational outcomes, agencies and facilities should establish practices to ensure family and caregiver engagement in the creation of an appropriate transition plan and see family members and caregivers as equal partners in making decisions. Systems are encouraged to employ the following to ensure that family members and caregivers are actively engaged:

Seek and use authentic family and caregiver input. Authentic family and caregiver input needs to be recognized as an important component of student success and should be valued particularly by administrators and educators working with the youth. Policies and practices should acknowledge family members and caregivers as part of the solution, not the problem. A family-centered approach to joint decisionmaking should be incorporated through policy and reinforced through continuous training for staff. One excellent way to determine whether an organization/school incorporates a family-centered approach to education decisions is to conduct a parent/caregiver satisfaction survey at various times in the school year. Another way is through the use of self-assessments to measure family engagement.

Having large numbers of family members and caregivers attend school-related activities provides a good indication that they feel welcomed and valued and is likely a solid indication of engagement.

Assist family members and caregivers in overcoming barriers to participation. Agencies and facilities can use many practices to assist families and caregivers overcome unintended barriers to participating in the education of their children, including taking steps to ensure that the physical environment is truly welcoming to family members and caregivers, as well as providing family members and caregivers with clear explanations of what meetings and other events will take place and the purpose of each event. School staff, no matter the setting, can reassure family members and caregivers that they are important and necessary players in their child's academic achievement. Staff can help family members and caregivers address any reluctance they may have about participating in decisionmaking for their child's education by taking the time to provide them with all pertinent information and answering any questions about their roles and opportunities. Also, addressing transportation and scheduling issues to accommodate parents and caregivers should also be viewed as part of overcoming barriers.

Effectively communicate with family members and caregivers. Agencies and facilities should ensure that they regularly communicate with family members and caregivers in a manner that is comfortable, recognized by the family as effective, and ensures that families and caregivers can access any information disseminated by the agency or facility. This may mean that communication is conducted in a language that the parent can understand and that auxiliary aids and services are provided so that communication with parents with hearing, vision, or speech disabilities is as effective as that afforded others).[6] Additionally, all information shared must comply with applicable Federal and State confidentiality laws.[7]

Agencies and facilities should keep jargon to a minimum in conversation and written communication. If at first agencies and facilities are unsuccessful in securing family engagement, they should continue to reach out to families and caregivers via other modes of communication as well as face-to-face visits at their homes or at a community meeting space such as a public library. NDTAC's guides entitled, "Facility Toolkit for Engaging Families in Their Child's Education at a Juvenile Justice Facility" (Osher, Huff, Colombi, & Amelga, 2013) and

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[5] See U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, IDEA in Correctional Institutions: Dear Colleague Letter, December 5, 2014, available at http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/correctional-education/idea-letter.pdf.

[6] See Dear Colleague Letter concerning the applicability of Federal civil rights laws to juvenile justice residential facilities, dated December 8, 2014, available at http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-residential-facilities-201412.pdf.

[7] Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232g and 34 CFR Part 99, schools generally need prior written consent from parents or guardians to disclose personally identifiable information from education records to other family members and third parties.

"Family Guide to Getting Involved in Your Child's Education at a Juvenile Justice Facility" (Osher, Huff, Colombi, & Gonsoulin, 2012) may prove to be helpful tools for both facility school staff and family members on improving communication and family engagement. Finally, schools and other agencies should also be respectful in their interactions and communication with family members and caregivers.

Strategy 3: Establish specific polices to ensure meaningful cross-agency collaboration and communication designed to promote quality education services

Youth who are involved in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems are likely to access supports and services from a number of agencies, given their varied experiences and needs. Although agency and facility staff may be motivated and poised to engage in the work with youth who are system involved, no one agency or facility can fully address all the needs of these children and youth. The importance of cross-agency communication and collaboration in achieving better outcomes for youth who are system involved cannot be overstated (Children's Bureau, 2010).

As systems improve efforts to collaborate and communicate among agencies, they will realize less fragmentation and duplication of services and practices. Particularly during times of fiscal instability, child-serving agencies' efforts to foster a cooperative and collaborative approach will likely result in improved efficiency and effectiveness with existing resources, which in turn may promote quality education services for youth who are system involved.

Several practices and strategies for effective interagency communication and collaboration are provided in NDTAC's Practice Guide, "Improving Educational Outcomes for Youth in the Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Systems Through Interagency Communication and Collaboration" (Gonsoulin & Read, 2011).

Two relevant highlights from that practice guide include:

- **School districts and child-serving agencies should establish jointly written policies that allow for information exchange consistent with applicable Federal and State confidentiality laws and regulations.** These policies should be crafted collaboratively, using each agency's attorney. Joint policy statements should be codified by formal agreements, such as memoranda of understanding, which are promoted by the chief executive officer of each agency. Given the frequent changes in placement for youth who are justice involved, the rapid exchange of accurate education records is critical, whether the youth is confined in a detention setting (short-term) or State-operated secure-care setting (long-term). When records

are delayed or inaccurate, the outcome may result in a failure to award course credits, incomplete updates to the youth's IEP, and potentially poorly informed intake and placement decisions.

- **School districts and other child-serving agencies should not use the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as a barrier to information sharing.** FERPA and IDEA[8] generally require that school districts and schools obtain prior written consent of a parent or eligible student (i.e., a student 18 years of age or older or enrolled in a postsecondary institution) before disclosing personally identifiable information from education records; however, there are a number of exceptions to this prior consent requirement. Exceptions to the prior consent requirement[9] permit schools and school districts to disclose personally identifiable information from education records to officials of another school or school district, including a school or school district run by a juvenile justice agency, where a student is enrolled, or seeks or intends to enroll, so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, and the conditions set forth in §99.34 of the FERPA regulations are met. In light of requirements and exceptions, legal staff should take the time to interpret all applicable Federal and State laws for staff and procedurally identify what information about a youth may be shared and with whom. This guidance should be shared with all school, child welfare, juvenile justice, and other agency administrators to ensure that they understand and will abide by the provisions described.[10] Agencies may want to develop a template or matrix that guides staff through information-sharing processes and ensures that the system is compliant with applicable confidentiality laws and regulations. Additional information on appropriate information sharing is available in a FERPA Myth Buster developed by the Federal Coordinating Council's Youth Reentry Committee, available at http://csgjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Student-Records.pdf.

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[8] See 20 U.S.C. 1417(c) and 34 CFR §300.622.

[9] See 34 CFR §§99.31(a)(2) and 99.34 of FERPA regulations. Further, see http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/ptac/pdf/idea-ferpa.pdf for clarification regarding the IDEA and FERPA confidentiality provisions and the transmission of education records to correctional facilities.

[10] Readers are also encouraged to refer to the amendments to FERPA made by the Uninterrupted Scholars Act, P.L. 112-278, which also affect the confidentiality provisions in Parts B and C of IDEA. Joint guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services and the Department's Chief Privacy Officer is available at http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/uninterrupted-scholars-act-guidance.pdf.

Practice 4: Implement Policies and Practices That Prioritize Quality Education Services That Meet the Unique Needs of Youth Who Are System Involved

Policies are the principles or laws that guide action or practice. However, what is written in policy is not always implemented in practice, and what is actually implemented in practice is not always written into policy. This is frequently the case in complex youth serving systems like juvenile justice and child welfare. The youth within these systems are in constant motion. Educators and service providers have to act quickly to keep up with these youth, their needs, and the services they require. The systems that these youth flow into and out of do not move as quickly, however. Therefore, to effectively serve the youth in their charge, the systems themselves should be intentional and strategic in their policies and practices to maximize planning and prioritize education for these youth.

School has not always been a positive experience for youth within these systems, so it is critical that education programming and services build on successes in prior placements (Griller Clark & Mathur, 2010). Essential to this is the timely exchange of education-related information. If education records are not received, or if they are significantly delayed or incomplete, youth may not be enrolled in school or placed in appropriate classes, and youth with disabilities may not be provided individualized education and support services (Griller Clark & Unruh, 2011; Leone & Weinberg, 2012). Equally important is the need for youth to be assessed regularly to determine placement, services, and progress. Academic assessments should guide education placement and programming. If deficits are identified, youth should then receive individually tailored instruction and ongoing formative assessments to ensure instruction is effective and adequate progress is being made in the curriculum (Gonsoulin, Darwin, & Read, 2012). To ensure that these education practices, as well as others, are implemented, it is necessary to make sure funding is dedicated at the level required to meet the needs of the youth.

Strategy 1: Ensure timely exchange of information/records (information sharing) in a manner consistent with FERPA and any other applicable Federal and State confidentiality laws and regulations

Many youth in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems have significant gaps in their school attendance because they are constantly moving from one placement or institution to another. It is difficult for educators and service providers to keep up with these changes in placement, and even more difficult for them to obtain records for the youth from all these previous placements. Confidentiality of students' education records maintained by an education agency

or institution is required by FERPA; for eligible children with disabilities, IDEA's confidentiality provisions are also applicable.[11] Although FERPA was intended to protect children from unauthorized disclosure of education records, it is often interpreted incorrectly by many schools, leading them to believe that they cannot legally transfer records to juvenile justice agencies without parental consent. As previously mentioned in Practice 3 of this guide, FERPA does, in fact, allow schools to disclose, without written consent, education records to officials of another school or school district, including a school or school district run by a juvenile justice agency, where a student is enrolled, or seeks or intends to enroll, so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer and as long as certain conditions are met. Another exception to the general consent requirement in FERPA permits schools to disclose education records of students, without consent, to an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization authorized to access a student's case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care.[12]

As agencies contemplate information-sharing procedures in their policies, some thought should be given to the following components, which were adapted from the McArthur Foundation's Models for Change Information Sharing Toolkit (Juvenile Law Center & Child Welfare League of America, 2008):

- Identifying the routes of communication and information sharing (including the goals of the information sharing across agencies)

- Connecting electronic data systems across agencies

- Establishing joint case management

- Identifying the availability of the least restrictive setting and evidence-based practices

- Developing and implementing reentry efforts

- Evaluating the collaborative effort

- Sharing screening and assessment results and adopting common tools

- Ensuring protections for individuals as they pertain to data and information sharing

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[11] See http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html.

[12] See the U.S. Department of Education's "Guidance on the Amendments to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act by the Uninterrupted Scholars Act" at http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/uninterrupted-scholars-act-guidance.pdf.

- Establishing each agency's responsibilities and accountability for data collection

- Establishing quality control measures

Incorporating these components into decisions concerning information sharing will result in a firm foundation for cross-agency communication and collaboration. Further information on practical strategies for collaboration is located in NDTAC's companion practice guide on this topic (Gonsoulin & Read, 2011).

Once agencies understand and address legal protections related to confidentiality of records and implement policies accordingly, they can then begin to implement policies and practices related to the timeliness and completeness of records. For youth with disabilities, the timeliness of records request and reception is vital. IDEA requires that, if a child with a disability enrolls in a new school operated by a different public agency than the child's former school, the new public agency in which the child is enrolled must take reasonable steps to promptly obtain the youth's records, including IEPs and supporting documents related to the provision of special education and related services. Additionally, the previous public agency in which the child was enrolled must take reasonable steps to promptly respond to the request for records from the new public agency.[13] To ensure that records are being requested and received, this process should be documented. Additional accountability is likely to occur if there is a single point person, like a transition specialist, responsible for tracking the process (Griller Clark & Unruh, 2011). Title I, Part D requires an SA to designate a transition specialist for State-operated correctional facilities receiving Title I, Part D funds (see ESEA section 1414(c)(11)), which may be funded using Title I, Part D funds.

Records that should be requested and received for youth with disabilities should include not only special education documents, but transcripts, academic assessments, and samples of student work as outlined in NDTAC's Transition Toolkit (http://www.neglected-delinquent.org/sites/default/files/docs/transition_toolkit200808/entry.pdf). Finally, policies and practices should be established for sending records as well as receiving records. Frequently, record transfers from juvenile justice or child welfare agencies back to the public school occur only if the records were originally transferred to the juvenile justice or child welfare school (Griller Clark & Unruh, 2011). Neglecting this facet of records transfer can severely impede school reenrollment and success for youth from juvenile justice and child welfare systems.

Strategy 2: Use comprehensive needs-sensing and data collection and analysis to design individualized learning pathways

Determining the needs of youth in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems can be complicated. These youth generally have numerous needs and are typically assessed in terms of their risk to reoffend, mental health competency, drug or alcohol dependency, and behavior. They may not be adequately assessed for special education eligibility, academic strengths and weaknesses, vocational interests and abilities, and social skills. The purpose of conducting wide-ranging assessments should be to create a comprehensive, individualized education and transition path for the youth.

If youth within these systems are to be successful, they need a learning pathway that establishes a baseline of their skills, provides an individualized profile of strengths and weaknesses, and outlines a framework or plan for learning. Many systems are actively engaged in assessment and evaluation practices that focus on gathering information to guide decisionmaking. However, some focus too heavily on the data-gathering process and collect vast amounts of information but fail to use this information to guide programming or instruction; hence, they are "data rich" but "information poor" (Slotnik & Orland, 2010). To be effective, juvenile justice and child welfare systems must use assessment information to guide programming and services. To truly individualize learning, these data must be accessible so that practitioners can tailor instruction and services to the abilities, interests, preferences, and needs of each youth. The most efficient way for this to occur is for school, juvenile justice, child welfare, probation, and juvenile court databases to be linked and school data automatically uploaded to the other agencies (Leone & Weinberg, 2012). This can be difficult within and across systems, but many systems have prioritized the technology necessary to make it happen.

Strategy 3: Provide dedicated and adequate funding that facilitates and supports learning

Funding for juvenile justice and child welfare determines the level and type of education and related services offered. A recent Bureau of Justice Statistics report (2014) indicates that State corrections expenditures decreased by 5.6 percent from 2009 to 2010. Another study by the RAND Corporation (Davis et al., 2014) also found that State-level spending on correctional education declined during the economic downturn, with large-sized States cutting spending by an average of 10 percent and medium-sized States cutting spending by 20 percent. The report revealed that there are now fewer teachers, fewer course offerings, and fewer students enrolled in correctional education programs.

The RAND report echoes what the Federal Government already seems to know, that providing dedicated funding

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[13] See 34 CFR §300.323(g).

to justice and child welfare systems is necessary. In fact, the report, which was funded by The Second Chance Act (P.L. 110-199) of 2007, indicates that a $1 investment in correctional education translates into reduced incarceration costs by $4–$5 during the first 3 years after release. It also reaffirmed what we know from previous research, that employment after release is higher for individuals who participate in either academic or vocational education programs while incarcerated. Those who participated in vocational training were 28 percent more likely to be employed after release than those who did not receive such training. Although not studied for the purposes of this report, research demonstrates similar outcomes for youth in child welfare who receive quality education services while involved with the system (National Working Group on Foster Care and Education, n.d.).

A primary purpose of Title I, Part D is to improve education services for children and youth in local and State institutions for neglected or delinquent children and youth so that they have the opportunity to meet the same challenging academic content and achievement standards that all children are expected to meet. In turn, State legislatures and counties and districts should prioritize the academic success of these young people. By leveraging Federal and State dollars in a coordinated, purposeful manner, States and localities can expand services where needed, build upon the most effective practices, and increase the likelihood of success for students involved and at risk of involvement with the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. Title I, Part D funds are frequently used to support innovative programs and services that substantially improve outcomes for system-involved youth, like transition (Griller Clark & Unruh, 2010). Finally, Title I, Part D, Subpart 2 funding can support LEA-based reentry/transition services. SEAs, SAs, and LEAs are reminded to submit counts of neglected and delinquent youth enrolled in their schools and to identify eligible facilities and programs in order to maximize Federal support that will in turn serve more youth or the neediest of youth in the community and State.

Conclusion

Education programming for youth who are system involved needs to be comprehensive, of high quality, and comparable to that of their nonsystem-involved peers. This NDTAC practice guide promotes 4 overarching practices and 13 supporting strategies designed to enhance existing education programs and help to level the education playing field for students who are neglected and/or delinquent. Although most of the practices and strategies are applicable for students across settings, the implementation should be adapted to fit each setting, which may be more difficult in some settings than others. In addition, all settings need to ensure high levels of accountability and elevate education to a level of importance comparable to schools for nonsystem-involved youth in their neighborhood schools.

This guide provides systems with concrete practices and implementation strategies to create quality education services for all students, but with a particular focus on the unique population of students who are at risk served by child welfare and juvenile justice systems. NDTAC hopes administrators and practitioners across the juvenile justice, child welfare, education, and mental health fields will use this guide to examine current practices and make the changes necessary to fully support system-involved youth through quality education services. The Center also hopes State Title I, Part D administrators will use the practices and strategies found in this guide to promote sound and creative uses of Part D funds to supplement existing education services. By taking an individualized approach to addressing the academic and behavioral needs of students involved with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, regardless of setting, schools offer these students greater opportunities for success and take one big step toward fostering better outcomes for this undersupported population.

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Appendix: Resources and Examples

This appendix provides resources and examples of the practices and strategies described in this guide, and is organized by each of the major practices identified. These examples and resources embody many or all of the strategies for each practice and—although items are organized by practice—many exemplify more than one practice. As the guide asserts, it is important to consider implementing these practices and strategies in concert to form a coherent and comprehensive program. Resource links immediately follow each description.

Practice 1: Implement Principles That Impact Educator and Learner Outcomes

In Louisiana, the Office of Youth Development/Office of Juvenile Justice uses the Ergometrics IMPACT Juvenile Justice Testing and Training System to screen prospective juvenile justice employees, especially frontline staff who have direct contact with youth. The instrument is a nonverbal screening that predicts a person's actions and responses to youth behavior in the following eight areas: harshness or aggressiveness, weakness or conflict avoidance, crossing professional boundaries, concern for youth development, communication style, teamwork, reading, and counting skills. If a prospective employee does not reach the appropriate threshold, he or she may not be considered for employment in a secure-care setting. More information about the IMPACT system can be found at http://www.ergometrics.org/impact.cfm.

The Maricopa County Education Service Agency in Arizona uses a multistep process to screen prospective employees with the Transforming Juveniles through Successful Transition (TJST) program. This process can be identified within the TJST Interview Selection Process chart and the TJST Transition Facilitator Interview Selection Process Chart. The final product of the process is the Annual Report. First, a screening survey is completed based on the values of "Kids at Hope," a project associated with Arizona State University. Second, if the person scores well on this strength-based screening, the written application is scored against a rubric and their credentials are officially verified. The third step in the hiring process is participation in a skill-based exercise that focuses on the skills needed for the job being applied for; this exercise is scored against a matrix. The final step of the hiring process is the actual job interview by a panel of leaders in the county. For prospective employees to reach the interview stage, they must meet preestablished competency levels in the three initial steps of the process to help ensure that the county hires the very best person for the important job of addressing educational outcomes for youth who are system involved.

www.neglected-delinquent.org/sites/default/files/docs/TJSTInterviewSelectionProcess.docx
www.neglected-delinquent.org/sites/default/files/docs/TJSTTransitionFacilitatorInterviewSelectionProcess.docx
www.neglected-delinquent.org/sites/default/files/docs/MaricopaCountyAnnualReportInfo.pdf

The Louisiana Office of Youth Development/Office of Juvenile Justice uses a classroom observation form that correlates directly to the teacher evaluation process in its facility schools. The instrument was based on the recommended attributes found in the State Department of Education's teacher observation and evaluation guidance, with a few adaptations based on the specialized population and setting. The major components of the instrument are preparation, classroom management, instruction, the utilization of multiple instructional strategies, and the engagement of paraprofessionals.
www.neglected-delinquent.org/sites/default/files/docs/LouisianaClassroomObservationInstrument2.pdf

The Juvenile Services Education Program operated by the Maryland State Department of Education establishes a theme for staff development for the 12-month school year. A staff development day for all district staff is conducted at the beginning of each year. An annual calendar of staff development activities focusing on the year-long theme is created and disseminated to educational staff by the supervisory staff of the Center Office. In this way, staff development is strategic, sequential, and more thoughtful; it builds on previous learning and is planned to promote staff excellence.
www.neglected-delinquent.org/sites/default/files/docs/MarylandStateDeptStaffDayAgenda.pub
www.neglected-delinquent.org/sites/default/files/docs/MarylandStateDeptJSEPlanofWork.doc

Arizona Correctional Educators holds a symposium each May to focus attention on the needs of professional educators who work to improve outcomes for system-involved youth, including cross-over youth. The topics selected are geared not only to inform educators and administrators of best practices but to improve overall education programming for youth who are involved in child care agencies in the State of Arizona. Additionally, this staff development activity is designed to promote enhanced learning opportunities for educators in a peer-to-peer environment to address the academic and behavioral needs of the youth served by Arizona's justice education staff.
www.neglected-delinquent.org/sites/default/files/docs/ACEAnnualSymposium.pdf

Through its State Department of Education, Maryland established an educational code on salary computation for juvenile correctional education and administrative

staff. The code established a single pay scale for educators across the State and is based on the average salaries for the county school districts where they operate schools in secure-care facilities. To ensure fair and equitable salaries for staff, the salary computation is reviewed annually to reflect any changes in educators' salary in the counties where correctional education schools operate.
www.neglected-delinquent.org/sites/default/files/docs/MarylandEducationCode.doc

In many States, school staff working inside secure facilities and other placement facilities for youth who are system involved are not evaluated effectively or offered meaningful professional development opportunities, in spite of a growing body of research showing that teacher quality is the primary driver of student achievement. This is not the case in Indiana's Department of Correction (IDOC), which is implementing the State-sponsored teacher evaluation framework, RISE, for educators in its youth facilities. IDOC adopted the RISE framework and began training principals and educators on the tool during the fall of 2012. IDOC is using the system this year to evaluate principals and educators. According to educational leadership in Indiana, "implementing RISE has provided us with a consistent tool that we can use to train our principals and educators. Although we are just in our first year of implementing it, I can feel the difference it is making—our educators know our standards, and more and more are working to meet them, which is good for the youth in our care." More information can be found on the RISE Indiana Web site.
http://www.riseindiana.org/

Practice 2: Instruct Students in a Manner That Prepares Them for Productive Citizenship and Decisionmaking in the Future

The Office of Youth Development/Office of Juvenile Justice in Louisiana improved career technical programs in secure settings by aligning and adopting a State-approved curriculum for career technical education programs. Student Competency Records (SCRs) (similar to the ones used in the community college system) were created for each course offering. The SCR is designed to track a youth's progress in mastering skills needed to complete certification as well as class hours "clocked" for each set or subset of skills. These programs are more rigorous than traditional career technical programs offered in juvenile justice settings and also allow students' credits to transfer to any career technical school in the State.
www.neglected-delinquent.org/sites/default/files/docs/LouisianaCareerTechnicalPrograms.pdf

The CCCOE uses technology to deliver instruction to youth in combination with direct teacher-led instruction and small group work for both short- and long-term education programming. It uses two commercial programs to address credit recovery and to fill gaps in numeracy skills and computation. The CCCOE uses Catchup Math for numeracy work and ODYSSEYWARE for credit recovery efforts.
http://catchupmath.com/
http://www.odysseyware.com/
http://www.cccoe.k12.ca.us/

Foxfire Schools in Zanesville, OH, operates education programs for youth at risk of disengaging or leaving school. The learning environment is built on the principle of developing the whole child to cultivate student success. Embedded in the school mission is the desire to have a positive and productive impact on all students' lives and to help students reach their maximum potential by following a set of core character values including caring, honesty, teamwork, discipline, character, work ethic, respect, accountability, and loyalty. These core character values are integrated into all aspects of the culture through daily interactions and modeling between and among staff and students.
www.foxfireschools.com

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) has long been recognized as an evidence-based system or framework that addresses the learning environment and employs multiple methods and strategies to improve outcomes for students, including young people who have behavior concerns, disabilities, and academic deficits. The NDTAC guide, "Supporting Student Achievement through Sound Behavior Management Practices in Schools and Juvenile Justice Facilities: A Spotlight on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports," explores PBIS and its benefits. Recently, there has been increased interest—and success—in implementing PBIS in facility schools. Facility schools in Alabama, California, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, New Mexico, North Carolina, Texas, and Washington have implemented PBIS to improve both academic and behavioral outcomes for young people.
http://www.neglected-delinquent.org/sites/default/files/docs/SupportingStudentAchievement.pdf
The national technical assistance center for Positive Behavior Interventions and Support link:
http://www.pbis.org/

The Pennsylvania Academic and Career/Technical Alliance (PACTT) has established clearly defined standards for correctional education programs for residential facilities, day treatment, and community-based programs. The PACTT provides training to correctional education programs that are designed to improve academic and career/technical training for youth who are in residential placement, and especially focusing on selected standards for effective reentry to the community. Their philosophy promotes career/technical training that is integrated with the academic program that

may ultimately lead to employment for the youth or young adult.
http://www.pacttalliance.us/

The Lancaster County [Nebraska] Youth Services Center Pathfinder Education Program provides education services for youth confined in the local detention center through Lincoln Public Schools. Brochures on the Lancaster County Youth Services Center provide further information on the Pathfinder Education Program and its services. In addition to offering young people traditional education services comparable to public instruction in Nebraska, the program also recognizes the value of extending the educational development of its students in the areas of fine arts, technology, life skills, and health education.
www.neglected-delinquent.org/sites/default/files/docs/LancasterCountyPathfinderEducationProgramBrochure1.pdf
www.neglected-delinquent.org/sites/default/files/docs/LancasterCountyPathfinderEducationProgramBrochure2.pdf

The Stadium View School in Minneapolis, MN, affords youth the opportunity to participate in a weekly program known as Mentoring Peace Through Art. This is an example of community agencies supporting the school program and young people who are system involved. For information on this weekly program, and the program in its entirety, visit the school's Web site. The program seeks to develop students through socially and culturally relevant self-expression in the arts. Other community assistance programs for the young people enrolled in Stadium View School include music appreciation, song writing, and laboratory opportunities through the Bell Museum of Natural History.
http://stadiumview.mpls.k12.mn.us/

Practice 3: Implement Effective Transitional Practices and Services

The State of Washington, through its Department of Education, operates a transition advocates program where multiple regionally based advocates work directly with secure-care staff, youth, family members, and the receiving school as youth approach their release date from secure facilities. The facility's manual identifies its practices and programs. The advocates work with all parties beyond release, through the reentry process, and for an individually determined time frame following release. Their efforts have increased the number of youth who reenroll in school and help the facility, family, and community school navigate the critical information and record exchange tasks. The program is funded through multiple funding sources, including Title I, Part D program and State dollars. The educational advocates ensure that youth's grades and credits transfer to community schools, IEPs are current, and the IEP committee's decisions affecting programming are in place. They also work directly with receiving community schools to ensure that the

transition process is smooth, to coordinate with probation staff, and to ensure that family members understand their role in promoting a successful transition.
http://k12.wa.us/InstitutionalEd/pubdocs/EA_Manual.pdf

Lancaster County Youth Services Center in Nebraska promotes the involvement of family members, who are considered to be contributing partners in their children's education. When youth enter the Center, parents receive a letter that identifies critical staff and provides information about how to contact staff. The letter ends with this encouraging and inviting sentence: "We would like to share with you information regarding facility functions as well as inquire [about] and verify information about your child." The letter also asks questions about special needs of the child, including eligibility for special education. The Center has established a family checklist that has been implemented as part of the admissions process. The checklist is designed to guide both phone and face-to-face meetings with parents; it asks whether the youth is currently seeing a counselor or therapist and requests name and contact information for the counselor. It also provides family with the physical address of the facility and school to encourage visitation and participation in activities, and provides the phone numbers of critical staff. Additionally, it asks whether the family has questions. The education program is operated by Lincoln Public Schools.
www.neglected-delinquent.org/sites/default/files/docs/LancasterCountyGuardianChecklist.pdf

Douglas County Youth Detention Center in Omaha, NE, uses a standardized parent interview questionnaire. Family members are interviewed by school staff as close as possible to the time a youth is admitted to the center, or by phone if scheduling a face-to-face interview is impossible. The focus of the interview is to gather as much educationally relevant information from family members as possible early in the youth's confinement. This includes questions about special education history, the existence of a 504 plan, sports and extracurricular activities in which their child is engaged, and academic performance questions.
www.neglected-delinquent.org/sites/default/files/docs/DouglasCountyParentQuestionnaire.pdf

Youth involved with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems experience many transitions between education programs—from community schools into facilities, between facilities, between schools and different districts, and when returning to their community schools. Thus, it is critical that relevant agencies understand the conditions under which FERPA permits the transfer of student records. Recently, the U.S. Department of Education completed a Mythbuster that focuses on this important education law and record exchange. The Mythbuster briefly discusses how FERPA specifically authorizes the nonconsensual disclosure of

personally identifiable information from students' education records to State or local authorities within the juvenile justice system under several conditions.
http://csgjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Student-Records.pdf

Maricopa County, AZ, is participating in a federally funded Teacher Incentive Fund grant entitled "Rewarding Excellence in Instruction and Leadership (REIL)." Maricopa County values its system-involved educational leaders and has written this grant to include educational leaders from juvenile and correctional education facilities in staff development opportunities with other instructional leaders across the State. In this way, system-involved educational leaders receive the same staff development as their nonsystem-involved, community-based educational peers. One component of the effort focuses on promoting effective educational transition practices for system-involved youth and better coordination of educational efforts across multiple school settings.
www.neglected-delinquent.org/sites/default/files/docs/REILGrant.pdf

The Northwest Wyoming Board of Cooperative Educational Service (NW BOCES) in Thermopolis, WY, provides residential care for system-involved youth. The population whose needs are addressed by services at NW BOCES typically comprises youth with mental health challenges who have often struggled in school, community, and home settings. One major component of their work is the reintegration of these youth into their community schools and homes. Consequently, reentry or transition efforts are extensive and partially funded by Title I, Part D dollars. Transition efforts include monthly communication with family and schools on youth progress, family engagement activities and invitations to participate in center activities, the provision of behavior-shaping specialists who help design behavior plans, Equine-Assisted Learning and Ropes course activities to build social skills and foster trusting relationships, and the inclusion of youth in community activities and events as both participants and observers.
http://www.nwboces.com/

Practice 4: Implement Policies and Practices That Prioritize Quality Education Services That Meet the Unique Needs of Youth Who Are System Involved

The Arizona Detention Transition Project initiated comprehensive records request policies and procedures after it was determined that special education records were not being received in a timely fashion. A transition specialist, in coordination with detention and education personnel, worked to track records using a logbook. If records were not received within 10 days, the requesting party followed up, made a second request if necessary, and logged the outcome. After records were obtained, they were evaluated to determine whether there was a history of special education services and if so, whether there was an existing IEP. IEPs were then amended, modified, or developed for each youth with a disability. They also created a memorandum of understanding between the juvenile detention centers and the State department of juvenile corrections establishing the automatic transfer of records when a youth is transferred from detention to juvenile corrections. Furthermore, they ensured that local education agencies are aware of Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines allowing the transfer of records to correctional facilities, and implemented practices to expedite the creation of transcripts for special education students prior to their release from juvenile detention so they were ready for their transition to public school (Griller Clark, Mathur, & Helding, 2009).
http://www.edjj.org/focus/prevention/JJ-SE/TOOLS%20Step%209%20(5-9-07).pdf

Passed in 2003, AB 490 was a legislative effort in California based on the Federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The legislation was designed to address some of the barriers to education faced by children who are dependents (in foster care) or wards (in the delinquency system) of the juvenile court. If a child changes schools because of a move to another home placement, under AB 490 the child has the right to be enrolled in the new school immediately, even if outstanding fees, fines, or other items or money are due to a school or if the student does not have the clothing (e.g., school uniform) or school records (e.g., academic or medical records, immunizations, proof of residency) normally required for enrollment. Within 2 business days of receiving a request for enrollment, the foster youth liaison for the new school must contact the school last attended by the child to obtain all academic and other records. Within 2 business days of receiving a transfer request, which the social worker or probation officer must provide to the school, the school district must transfer the child and deliver the student's school records to the new school. The records must include a determination of seat time, full or partial credits earned, current classes and grades, immunization records, and, if applicable, special education or Section 504 records. AB 490 protects a child's grades from being lowered due to absences caused by a change in placement, a court appearance, or a court-ordered activity. Local educational agencies (LEAs) must award all students, not just those in foster care, with credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed at a public school, juvenile court school, or nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency (Leone & Weinberg, 2010).
http://www.cfyetf.org/uploads/AB%20490%20FAQs06.pdf

The Virginia Department of Education adopted guidelines that specify the procedures and timelines for the transition of student education information and the roles and responsibilities for collaboration between the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Correctional Education, the Detention Home Education Program, and public

education agencies (Virginia Department of Education, 2006).
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/student_family/re-enrollment/procedures_released_custody.pdf

eScholar is at the forefront of enabling State education agencies (SEAs) and local education agencies (LEAs) to collect and use education data to improve educational outcomes. They are focused on delivering solutions which enable education agencies to integrate, manage and present key education-related data.
http://www.escholar.com/solutions/why-escholar/

The Ed-Fi Alliance, LLC, was founded as an organization dedicated to advancing the education technology sector and advocating for the responsible use of data to improve student achievement and teacher satisfaction. Ed-Fi technology serves as the foundation for enabling interoperability among secure education data systems designed to improve student achievement and teacher satisfaction.
http://www.ed-fi.org/
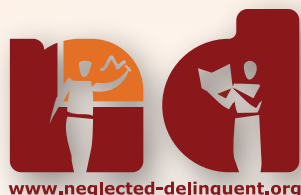
www.neglected-delinquent.org

The National Evaluation and Technical Assistance Center

for the Education of Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent or At-Risk

American Institutes for Research
1000 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007-3835

For more information, please contact NDTAC at ndtac@air.org
or visit our Web site at http://www.neglected-delinquent.org.

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