



The Challenge of Teaching (and Learning) in Prison

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Management & Training Corporation (MTC) is a leader in the training of at-risk individuals. MTC manages and operates 23 Job Corps centers in 19 states for the U.S. Department of Labor, preparing disadvantaged youth for meaningful careers. MTC also operates privatized correctional facilities around the world with approximately 8,000 beds under contract. The MTC Institute, a research unit within MTC, addresses topics relevant to job training and corrections programs. The Institute is dedicated to objectively examining data, projecting trends, researching program models, tracking public policy developments, and shedding light on promising practices.

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THE IMPACT OF PRISON EDUCATION

The public is increasingly aware of the mounting research demonstrating that the right type of correctional programs lowers the number of inmates returning to prison by 25 to 30 percent¹. These reductions provide a taxpayer return on investment of approximately \$5 for every \$1 invested due to the avoidance of criminal justice costs (Brown, 2000). Maryland analysts report \$24 million in savings per year because of correctional education programs, twice as much as the State's investment (Steurer & Smith, 2003). These impressive findings result in increased attention and pressure for raising the outcomes, quality, and investment of such programs. Correctional educators and system managers must meet higher standards in training to ensure we achieve the maximum recidivism reductions, thereby increasing an institution's overall effectiveness and quality.

Research and reason tell us that prison programming is vital to the future success of ex-convicts. With the vast majority of new jobs requiring skilled workers, those released from prison need academic, vocational, and social skills training to be employable. Training and a secure job provide resources necessary for staying out of prison. According to the U.S. Department of Education, correctional education seeks to change an offender's behavior by enhancing knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values (Office of Voc & Adult Ed, 1999).

Unfortunately, though many correctional teachers

Unfortunately, though many correctional teachers around the country are performing their jobs very well, the corrections system as a whole is not designed to maximize rehabilitation through education.

preponderance of learning difficulties and styles, and lack of motivation among inmate students. The traditional focus on the educational process rather than outcomes creates hurdles in reaching maximum recidivism reductions. Correctional educators also fight for adequate funding and resources. The prison environment itself presents several obstacles, including inmate transfers, competition with prison jobs, interruptions for head counts, and negative attitudes toward programming. This report explores these issues and presents new ways of managing them.

OBSTACLES IN EFFECTIVE CORRECTIONAL INSTRUCTION

An institution's effectiveness is partially based on its ability to educate its inmates in programs known to reduce recidivism by 25 to 30 percent. Therefore, correctional management's goal is to have as many inmates as possible complete such courses. To maximize the success of programming, though, management and instructors must address the myriad obstacles faced in teaching inmates. Following are several of these challenges.

“[Correctional education] programs lead to lower recidivism rates . . . because they provide inmates with the knowledge, skills, attitude, and values needed to succeed in society and to avoid future criminal activity.” – Tolbert, 2002, pp.1-2

around the country are performing their jobs very well, the corrections system as a whole is not designed to maximize rehabilitation through education. Instructors and students face substantial intrinsic and extrinsic challenges to educational achievement. Many teachers struggle with the lower educational levels,

Eclectic Mixture of Students

Overall, inmates vary from the general population in learning styles, educational attainment, literacy, and employment experience. Correctional populations have lower educational attainment than the general

¹ After a review of 13 quantitative reviews of the literature, representing a minimum of 700 studies in all, the Correctional Service of Canada (2003) found that involvement in prison programming resulted in an average reduction in recidivism of about 10 percent. After further analysis of specific program characteristics, however, they concluded that, “...Effective (appropriate) programs are behavioural/highly structured in nature and target the criminogenic attitudes, values and behaviours of higher-risk offenders” (p.1). Participation in appropriate programs led to an average reduction of 25 to 30 percent in recidivism.

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Learning for these students is more difficult, thereby making effective instruction more intricate.

population: an estimated 41 percent of inmates do not have a high school diploma or a GED compared with 18 percent in the general population (Harlow, 2003). This may be due in part to a higher rate of learning disabilities found among inmates. An estimated 30 to 50 percent of inmates have a learning disability compared with 5 to 15 percent of the general adult population (Corley, 1996). Literacy is also lower within prisons. Furthermore, inmates' work experiences and skills are well below those of the general population (Lawrence, Mears, Dubin, & Travis, 2002).

Not only do correctional students differ from the general population, but discrepancies also exist within the group. Correctional educators face a classroom full of students with varied learning styles, educational needs, and school and work experiences. They some-

educational failure. Therefore, they may not enroll in programs or participate in classes with the same enthusiasm as the non-institutionalized population. Furthermore, negative peer pressure can discourage inmates from joining programs. Facility management and instructors often face the challenge of motivating inmates to involve themselves in available programming.

Over 90 percent of State prisons and all Federal prisons offer inmate educational programs (Harlow, 2003). However, participation rates decreased from 1991 to 1997, going from 57 to 52 percent in State prisons and from 67 to 56 percent in Federal institutions. While this decrease may be due to a lack of openings or the elimination of Federal and State funding, it may also be fed by a lack of inmate motivation in enrolling. Additionally, inmates in some jurisdictions have to relinquish paying jobs to participate in programs. Instructors must fight to maintain a classroom full of participating, eager students.

“Prisons . . . are presented with the unique opportunity to provide an education to a large concentration of individuals who fall in a high-risk group and have significant literacy needs.” – Tolbert, 2002, p.11

how must make sure each student gets what he or she needs to obtain the desired outcome, whether a GED, trade certificate, or another credential. In addition, they must do so in an open-entry/open-exit atmosphere under the constraint of multiple release dates. Learning for these students is more difficult, thereby making effective instruction more intricate.

To add greater complexity, almost all correctional programs to date have been developed with male inmates in mind. The rapid rise in the female prison population has led to an awareness that these programs are not as effective with females as they are with males in reducing recidivism because of emotional differences and the dissimilar reasons for incarceration. Educators of female populations are challenged to achieve maximum benefit with limited curriculum and research-proven programs.

Low Inmate Motivation and Participation

Inmates did not enter a correctional facility to attend classes. They often do not see the importance of gaining an education and many have a history of

Traditional Process Focus

Traditionally, correctional management and educators focus on inmate participation and the process of education instead of outcomes like a GED or vocational certificate. This can lead to several challenges in meeting the effectiveness standard of a 25 to 30 percent recidivism reduction. A process focus leads to a higher probability of inmates entering a program either too close to or too far away from a release date. Instructors will more often be challenged by integrating new students partway through a sequenced course as management sees a need to fill a vacant seat instead of keeping a cohort together.

Regular achievement updates are less likely to occur in a traditional system. Because outcomes are not the focus, evaluating a student's progress toward essential milestones is less important. An assessment of what the inmate needs to be successful upon release and how best to meet those needs may not occur, reducing an opportunity to help inmates stay out of prison once released.

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Limited Resources

Programs resulting in substantial recidivism reductions require an investment in qualified instructors, materials, and other resources, which research shows provides a significant return. Limited funding reduces both the number of inmates served and the effectiveness with which they are taught.

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With the near doubling of the prison population over the last decade, correctional systems have seen drastically higher funding for the construction and operation of facilities. Funding for correctional education, however, has not kept pace with the growth (Tolbert, 2002). Consequently, a smaller proportion of inmates can participate in programming.

Inadequate resources do not produce the type of quality programming required for the maximum impact on inmate lives. Courses must meet specific research-proven criteria to lead to the highest possible recidivism reduction, but management and instructors are not likely to implement such programs without funding support.

Institutional Culture and Attitudes

The culture of the prison plays an important role in the success of programming. If an institution is not secure, few advances can be made in rehabilitation.

students late to class, excessive disruptions for the counting of inmates or other administrative activities, and a living environment hostile to learning.

NEW SOLUTIONS TO MEET THE CHALLENGES

Despite the obstacles inherent in correctional programs, educating inmates continues to be fundamental to rehabilitation and to an institution's quality. Many correctional systems are uncovering innovative strategies to meet the barriers they face. Fortunately, several approaches address multiple difficulties at once. Due to the complexity of each prison system, these suggestions will not be solutions for every facility. However, management and educators can adapt these ideas to create viable options for their own settings.

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Effectively Instructing an Eclectic Mixture of Students

Despite the barriers to effectively teaching such a diverse population as inmates, growing research is showing how we can do just that. Institutional classrooms are full of struggling students, as shown by their lower achievement levels and higher incidence of learning disabilities. Studies are increasingly presenting how best to reach these learners.

**“For class attendance to be encouraged and strictly enforced by correctional officers, the education programs need to have strong and constant support from the wardens and superintendents of the prisons. If that support does not exist, the programs will suffer.”
– Tolbert, 2002, p.6**

But if safety and security are the only priority, rehabilitation is again hindered. In some institutions, correctional officers and other staff view programming as a nuisance or a privilege for which inmates are not worthy instead of a vital element to reducing recidivism. This feeling can permeate the culture of a prison and may be supported by management. In such cases, educators must fight for respect and validation. They often face hurdles in the form of officers bringing

Grouping students by achievement level as much as possible will enhance instruction and learning. An educator can then use the instructional tools most effective with each particular class rather than trying to reach a varied group of students with different educational needs at the same time. Placing students in like groups may also minimize the negative impact that an open-entry / open-exit system can have.

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The Bridges Learning System Program at New York's Lakeview Correctional Facility

The Bridges program focuses on improving a student's ability to learn. The quality of curriculum or instruction matter little if a student is unable to process and retain information.

The Lakeview Correctional Facility in Brocton, NY, adopted Bridges in 1998 to help improve learning for their Adult Basic Education students. All ABE students participate in a Bridges assessment measuring 12 general learning abilities necessary for academic success, including comprehension, memory, and problem solving. After assessment, an individual learning plan is created based on each inmate's strengths and weaknesses. About 180 students participate each year (Kim Lesmes, personal communication, September 3, 2003).

While Lakeview does not follow inmates post-release, a main factor in adopting the Bridges program was its success at Shutter Creek Correctional Institution in Oregon, where initial recidivism rates were zero percent for program participants. A 2001 evaluation at Lakeview showed statistically significant increases in all 12 learning abilities for participants (Bridges, 2001). Generally, Lakeview students improve two or more grade levels on the TABE test in the six months they are at the facility.

Presenting instructional material in a context familiar to the students can have a tremendous effect on the understanding and retention of students with learning difficulties (see Parkinson, Dulfano, & Nink, 2003). These learners need to know how a skill or piece of information fits into their lives—why it is useful for them to learn. Teaching material in context fulfills this need. Integrating academic and vocational instruction is also helpful. For some students, learning math in the framework of industry skills, such as carpentry, enhances understanding, increases motivation, and helps them overcome the psychological barriers they may have because of past frustrating educational experiences.

Struggling students need smaller bites of information at a time if they are to understand, remember, and apply it. Organizing courses so they move from academics to vocational instruction to social skills to other classes in shorter segments instead of hitting one subject for

multiple hours may help. Trying to cover too much material in one class period will not be effective for this type of student.

Gender responsive programming addresses the unique needs of female offenders, targeting the deficiencies or limitations that contributed to their incarceration. While research is limited in this area, attention from researchers and practitioners is increasing. Instructors have access to increasing resources to meet the needs of their female students (see Davis, 2001).

Increasing Inmate Motivation and Participation

Correctional systems are increasingly using mandatory education policies to overcome the challenge of low inmate motivation and participation. As of 2002, 44 percent of states and the Federal system had mandatory education laws or policies in adult corrections (McGlone, 2002). Requirements for both achievement level and program length have increased since 1993.

Requiring that inmates attend educational classes until they reach a specified achievement level is sound policy as long as sufficient monetary and management support is available to make the outcomes attainable. Jenkins outlines the following implications of a mandatory policy in his 2002 status report: "increased program security, increased status of education in the prison, and improved public perception of rehabilitative efforts within correctional systems" (p.11). He also points out the direct effect it can have on any underutilization of educational staff and facilities and the 'excuse' it provides for students to be in school.

Jenkins states, "Without mandatory education requirements, the objective educational needs of most offenders and society's interest in preparing offenders for release and community re-integration may not be met" (2002, p.11). An estimated 6,000 more Ohio inmates have taken advantage of education under the State's 15-year mandatory policy and law than would have if participation were voluntary (McGlone, 2002). Class attendance is the first step in the process of achieving GEDs, certificates, and other outcomes that affect recidivism.

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Mandatory Attendance in the Arkansas DOC School District

The mandatory education concept originated with the Federal Bureau of Prisons in the early 1980s. It was an incentive system, in that inmates achieving educational milestones could get better paying or higher-level job assignments within the system (Stephen Steurer, personal communication, November 18, 2003). Maryland and New Mexico were quick to follow with their own mandatory programs (Jenkins, 2002).

In 1997, the Arkansas Department of Correction School District began requiring all inmates that did not have a high school diploma or GED to attend school. Previously, only inmates without a diploma or GED who scored less than the 5th grade level on an academic achievement test were required to be in class.

At the time of policy change, concerns existed that inmates forced to attend school would cause disruptions, but the transition occurred incident-free due to a year of preparation (Glover, 2002).

- Inmates were notified that they would be required to attend school if they did not prove they had a high school diploma or GED. They had access to form letters they could mail at the DOC's expense to high schools requesting transcripts.
- Other concerns that the jobs inmates had previously completed would be left undone were also unfounded. Principals scheduled classes around important job priorities to minimize impact on work supervisors.

The effect of mandatory education on the number of GED graduates was apparent the first year.

- In the 1996-97 school year, 700 inmates graduated; this number increased to 865 in 1997-98, the first year of mandatory attendance.
- The average number of students served daily in the classroom also increased from 2,056 to 2,680.
- Very few incidents have occurred within the school facilities, thereby enhancing safety.

Although research suggests that mandated students achieve just as much, if not more, than voluntary students (Jenkins, 2002), the issue of motivation does not disappear with the implementation of mandatory education. Instructors in such systems may encounter apathy and even major resistance from some students that detract from the learning process of the whole class. Teaching students who have not chosen to participate then necessitates some creative encouragement. In addition, those working in systems without a mandatory policy must still find a way to elicit program participation.

To do this, prison staff can emphasize the value of education and program completion, citing specific, relevant examples of former inmates. By highlighting the effect education has on employment, wages, recidivism, and quality of life, inmates can begin to understand why involvement is important, whether they chose to participate or not. Success in learning is key in overcoming students' fears of failing yet again, so finding a way for each student to experience success is important. Additionally, students simultaneously engaged in academic and vocational training are likely to become readily knowledgeable of their need for more education when they cannot perform tasks or functions within the vocational program (Robert Marquardt, personal communication, September 26, 2003). These approaches can improve motivation levels of inmates and encourage their participation in various programs.

From a Traditional Process Focus to Outcomes

Building a programming system around desired outcomes like a GED or vocational certificate will enhance an institution's ability to meet increasing quality standards. An outcome focus eliminates many of the hurdles posed by a process concentration.

With an outcome objective, prisons are more likely to adequately assess the needs of inmates and then provide the necessary programs. Academic, vocational, social skills, and substance abuse status can be determined and then an individualized plan for reaching desired achievement levels can be set based upon estimated length-of-stay. Staff can plan entry dates

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for each necessary program that provide enough time for completion. This should minimize instructor and student frustration at departures partway through a course. Factors will affect a release date, though, so staff should periodically review the schedule and alter it if necessary. As waiting lists are reviewed, the programming needs of one inmate should be compared to those of others to ensure that the highest number of inmates prior to release can achieve maximum outcomes.

The Oregon Accountability Model

The Oregon Department of Corrections has developed a model encompassing factors known to influence the success of former inmates. The goal of the strategy is to reduce recidivism and help inmates become productive citizens.

The model starts with an enhanced, automated assessment process. This assessment identifies health, educational, and employment barriers for each inmate. The intake counselor then develops a plan for addressing the deficits, including specific programs the inmate should complete before release. The process “ensures inmates are placed in the appropriate correctional institution with an incarceration plan articulating a systematic schedule for change” (Oregon Dept of Corrections, 2003, p.1).

Facility staff track an inmate’s plan throughout his incarceration. Inmate advancement is linked to the Department’s Performance Recognition and Award System. Students are eligible for higher cash awards and other incentives as they progress through their plans into more complicated programs and activities. Under this system, both staff and inmates focus on the desired outcomes outlined in their plans, thereby decreasing the chance of later recidivism. Additionally, implementation of the model has uncovered great efficiency in the system. It now takes an average 1.5 times through a GED class before obtaining the certificate compared to a previous 8.5 times.

Contact Larry Herring with the Oregon DOC at 503-947-1040 or larry.l.herring@doc.state.or.us for more information.

An outcome focus also calls for periodic progress updates for each inmate. Educators regularly need to assess how close a student is to obtaining a certificate

or other outcome. The goal of simply seeing inmates “finish” a course with no measurable sense of achievement transforms into a desire to see them complete an objective outcome valued outside of the institution.

The incentives for inmate participation in this system must be aligned with the outcome goal. Good time, early parole, pay, and other rewards should come as inmates acquire credentials. Because we know that education and crime are inversely related, we can offer incentives to inmates for reaching higher levels of achievement.

In this altered system, correctional educators are supported using whatever instructional methods and resources that help students learn. They will employ contextual teaching, peer tutoring, and other research-proven practices for assisting struggling students, enhancing learning and achievement. Inmates then leave a facility armed with the diplomas and certificates that will improve their opportunities for success.

Overcoming Limited Resources

Ideally, prison programming would have ample funding and resources necessary to support a 25 to 30 percent recidivism reduction. Correctional facilities are increasingly held to quality standards that encompass the outcomes of programs. Consequently, policy makers and management must recognize the significance of providing adequate resources for education.

Peer tutoring and distance learning allow for increased participation with fewer instructors while still providing necessary instruction.

Making the required investments in programming can be difficult for systems, especially in fiscally tight times. Correctional educators and administrators in states that have reduced budgets or cut correctional programming altogether must creatively find a way to reach desired outcomes. Focusing available resources on professional processes identified in the Correctional Education Association (CEA) standards is beneficial in working toward established outcomes. Furthermore, peer tutoring and distance learning allow for increased participation with fewer instructors while still providing necessary instruction.

With peer tutoring, a higher number of students can have access to programs in times of shrinking budgets. Moreover, peer tutoring can provide the intense,

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individualized attention that illiterate students need with minimal instructors. The tutor also benefits from a structured arrangement, improving communication and educational skills. When the Eddie Warrior Correctional Center in Taft, Oklahoma, added 28 tutors to their existing 4 and formalized the program, their GED attainment rate went from an average of 32 per year to over 190 (Davis, 2001).

Peer Tutoring in Maryland and Washington State

Both Maryland and Washington State have implemented successful peer tutoring programs to assist struggling students. Recognizing significant numbers of illiterate inmates, the Maryland State Department of Education, Correctional Education Program launched the Peer Tutoring program in the early 1980s (Steurer, 2000). This initiative allowed larger numbers of illiterate and barely literate inmates to improve their skills before leaving the system. The National Institute of Corrections named Peer Tutoring one of the top ten adult correctional literacy programs in the U.S.

Since the early 1990s, all major correctional facilities in Maryland have had a reading lab with trained inmate tutors to help students unprepared to work independently. In these labs, students work with a tutor the entire class period. An instructor monitors lessons and meets with tutor trainees. The literacy labs are able to accommodate at least 400 illiterate students per day, many more than would be served otherwise. On average, these students gain about three months in reading skill for every month of instruction. In addition, the tutors learn how to help others, furthering their own rehabilitation.

The "Read to Succeed" literacy program was developed in 1986 to serve inmates in the Washington State Reformatory (Franklin, 2000). The program design "elicit[s] help from the inmates in supplementing the contract educational system in teaching the inmate to read" (p.286).

- Tutors can earn pay and college credits.
- Tutors must have a high school diploma or GED and pass a college-level course on tutoring.

- An employee coordinator reviews the inmate's background (ethnicity, education, personality, etc.) and selects an appropriate inmate client with whom to work.
- The coordinator provides the student with the tutor's name and housing location. The learner decides whether to proceed with the match, giving him some control in the process.
- Once the partnership is finalized, the student, tutor, and coordinator meet to formalize a schedule, meeting three times a week for an hour each time.

The program has had success in several areas.

- Over 100 trained inmate tutors taught over 1,000 inmates to read in 11 years.
- The tutors feel pride in teaching another to read and behave well so as not to lose that privilege.

The tutor and the student learn to trust one another, and the tutors are able to recruit other inmates they recognize as illiterate.

Departments of corrections increasingly recognize distance learning as a way to train more inmates and staff less expensively. The U.S. Distance Learning Association defines distance learning as "the acquisition of knowledge and skills through mediated information and instruction, encompassing all technologies and other forms of learning at a distance" (Gaseau, Martin, & Klarfeld, 2002, p.1). Training can come via a video tape, a CD-ROM, the internet, or another technology. Distance learning is designed to complement traditional classroom instruction, not eliminate it. While students continue to need a teacher's enthusiasm, support, and expertise to succeed in learning (see Batchelder & Rachal, 2000), correctional educators are often able to accommodate many more students when using some form of distance learning, which is increasingly important in times of tight budgets.

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Nationwide Resources: Corrections Learning Network and Safety-Net

Corrections Learning Network (CLN), based in Washington State, and Safety-Net, headquartered in Maryland, are the main suppliers of distance learning content in corrections. Both receive funding from the U.S. Department of Education and offer instruction through satellite technology. Facilities receive a variety of education classes for inmates and staff training under either system. An instructor with the Texas Youth Commission reports a 75 percent increase in her students' passing rate in social studies after using a Safety-Net video series (Arnall, 2002). Such networks allow correctional systems to standardize instruction and effectively stretch their programming budgets.

Supportive Culture and Attitudes

An institutional culture endorsing education augments the effectiveness of prison programming. With the growing trend toward measuring a facility's effective-

ness, management is increasingly aware of the programming effect on recidivism. Instructors in isolation cannot alter the prevailing culture, but may be able to enlist the support of other staff through sharing related research. Educators can also publicize success stories for present and former students. Prison management should ensure that staff are all aware of the rehabilitation and programming goals of the institution. Tying employee bonuses to those goals reinforces their importance. Little by little, the culture may become one in which inmate learning thrives.

among the programs most endorsed by staff, with 96 percent supporting literacy programming, 95 percent supporting GED classes, 91 percent supporting job training classes, and 63 percent supporting college courses for inmates. Staff from all departments, including administrators, program staff, and security staff, indicated strong approval for inmate programming. This type of internal support is vital as facilities work to achieve rehabilitation through education.

The correctional education department in Maryland has a state accountability system that encourages wardens and staff to support education within their facilities. Correctional institutions receive report cards similar to those given to each public school. Measures reported include GED passing rate, occupational completions, and program attendance. Prison management can see how they compare with other facilities and work to improve their relative performance. The report cards have also helped legitimize the correctional education system for the State Board of Education and others within the traditional system (Stephen Steurer, personal communication, November 18, 2003).

“Wardens and superintendents who value rehabilitative programs make sure that the incentives are properly structured and that correctional staff willingly and consistently ensure the smooth operation of these programs.” – LoBuglio, 2001, p.123

ness, management is increasingly aware of the programming effect on recidivism. Instructors in isolation cannot alter the prevailing culture, but may be able to enlist the support of other staff through sharing related research. Educators can also publicize success stories for present and former students. Prison management should ensure that staff are all aware of the rehabilitation and programming goals of the institution. Tying employee bonuses to those goals reinforces their importance. Little by little, the culture may become one in which inmate learning thrives.

An institutional culture endorsing education augments the effectiveness of prison programming.

A recent study conducted at multiple Kentucky prisons shows overwhelming support by prison staff for inmate programming (Tewksbury, 2003). A survey of all facility staff found that educational programs were

Educational Support from the Top Down at Bradshaw State Jail

Bradshaw State Jail in Henderson, Texas has created a culture, beyond their formal policies, that supports programs, which has led to outstanding educational outcomes. Warden Michael Bell ensures that all security staff understand the facility's mission of educating the offenders in their care and expects all functional areas to support programming.

At Bradshaw, a feeling of mutual respect exists between the security and education staff, far different from the undercurrent of hostility that often surfaces between the two areas of responsibility. One of the most important things in achieving an offender's education is attendance in class, and jail management instruct the security staff to make certain that the offenders

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are sent to class on time and to encourage those reluctant to go. In addition, Warden Bell takes responsibility for both the positive and negative program results, a sense of accountability that filters down to the rest of the staff.

Bradshaw's educational staff take pride in what the jail has accomplished, and Deputy Warden Bobby Pool credits the facility's GED and vocational production to their commitment. He encourages that dedication in the educational staff meetings, helping motivate instructors to stay focused on their mission. Bradshaw was the second private facility in the U.S. accredited by the Correctional Education Association and has maintained that accreditation. The State of Texas recognizes the jail as a leader in education, which has been the third highest GED producer in the U.S. Over 200 hundred inmates per year have graduated with their GED while at Bradshaw since 1997, with 242 in 2002, the first year of the new GED format. Additionally, the facility saw 846 vocational graduates in 2002, up from 545 in 2001.

Dr. Clint Davis, facility principal, said, "Bradshaw is the only facility I have ever worked at where security, support, and supervisory staff were all involved in the success of programs. I feel that [Bradshaw] has really hit on something when accountability for programs is addressed at all areas of the facility" (Clint Davis, personal communication, October 29, 2003). This support has led to success in inmate achievements, promoting rehabilitation.

CONCLUSION

Research increasingly demonstrates that programming occurring inside correctional institutions greatly affects what happens once inmates are released. As such, a prison's effectiveness and quality level are no longer dependent simply on its ability to house offenders in a safe and secure environment. Program-related outcomes that will reduce recidivism offer a true cost savings potential, which is paramount in decreasing overall costs. With a taxpayer return on investment of approximately \$5 for every \$1 invested, programs need to be recognized for their derived value.

The corrections system as a whole is not designed to maximize rehabilitation through education. Correctional educators face substantial hurdles in delivering effective educational instruction. The offender population presents special challenges for the correctional educator (e.g., disparate learning styles, educational attainment, literacy, and employment experience), and has higher incidences of learning disabilities. In addition, educators are dealing with a classroom of offenders who often lack the motivation to become educated. Instructors also must manage the classroom with limited resources and distractive processes inherent in a correctional environment. Further, placing the highest priority on security aspects is often done without considering possibilities that limit the detrimental impact on equally important outcomes attainable through a supported educational program.

Fortunately, many agencies and organizations have implemented programs that demonstrate the success of correctional education in overcoming these barriers. Some correctional educators have the support of the agency or institutional administrators to try new approaches that minimize the operational impact and maximize the potential of students. This support is leading to greater program opportunities, as well as enhanced offender motivation and participation. Additionally, some jurisdictions are effectively using technology to expand their capabilities through distance learning. However, some elected officials and agency executives appear to persist in the short-sighted approach related to funding of correctional education.

If correctional facilities are held to quality standards that encompass educational outcomes and are provided with necessary resources, offenders and taxpayers will realize long term benefits through substantial recidivism reductions. ■

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