

# Memorandum

Date: January 12, 2001

To: Tom Boyd, President, State Board of Education  
Ralph Townsend, Chairperson, State Board of Correction  
Governor's Office  
Legislative Leadership

From: Mike Rush, Chair, Corrections Education and Programs Advisory Council

Subject: Recommendations

Enclosed is a copy of the recommendations of the Corrections Education and Programs Advisory Council. These recommendations specifically focus on Adult Corrections. These recommendations are being submitted to the State Board of Education and the State Board of Corrections for their review and approval. Also enclosed is a copy of the original recommendations developed by the State Board of Education's subcommittee and adopted by the Board of Education in November of 1999.

Early in 1999, the State Board of Education's 70% Committee appointed an ad hoc committee to identify educational issues within the scope of their responsibility related to correctional education programs. The Board approved the formation of a subcommittee representing key agencies and interest groups (Department of Education, Department of Corrections, Department of Juvenile Corrections, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Division of Professional-Technical Education, and Minority Education) to continue the discussion. The subcommittee met during the Fall of 1999 and submitted recommendations to the State Board. Those recommendations were adopted by the Board in November of 1999 and the Board also asked the committee to follow-up on those recommendations. In January of 2000, legislation was proposed referencing the delivery of correctional education services and programs. As a result, the subcommittee follow-up was put on hold until the legislative issues were settled.

A meeting was held July 13, 2000 for administrative level stakeholders to discuss issues involved in the delivery of educational services and programs to inmates in Idaho. They included James Spalding, Director of the Department of Corrections; Brent Reinke, Director of the Department of Juvenile Corrections; Marilyn Howard, State Superintendent of Public Instruction; Kathryn Ruffalo and Tom Morley representing the Governor's Office; and Greg Fitch, Executive Director of the State Board of Education. They agreed that a committee be appointed by the State Board

of Education, the State Board of Correction and the Department of Juvenile Corrections. They also agreed the committee be charged with collaborating in the development of policy and funding recommendations that would improve correctional education and program services with

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the long term goal of reducing the growing incarceration and recidivism rates. Upon further direction from the decision makers in July, 2000, they agreed to establish a memorandum of understanding to set forth the general framework for participation, interaction and collaboration. The Governor's office, the Division of Professional-Technical Education, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Legislature were invited as ex-officio members.

The Advisory Committee on Correctional Education and Programs held its first official meeting on August 31, 2000. Two additional meetings were held on October 23 and December 11. During those meetings, recommendations were drafted and agreed upon related to education and related services in the adult correction system. Those recommendations are submitted to the respective Boards for review and approval.

**Recommendations  
of the  
Corrections Education and Programs Advisory Committee  
For Adult Correction Education  
December 2000**

- I. Corrections should continue to be responsible for the education program and the State Board of Education should work with the State Board of Correction to develop a process to provide a thorough and regular review of corrections education.
  - Include a reevaluation of the School Accreditation process.
  - A. Include a process to evaluate curricula and programs.
  - B. Include assessment process.
  - C. Include review of revised policies developed by the Department of Correction consistent with state law.
  - D. Include developing procedures to ensure hiring appropriate personnel consistent with the need and requirements of providing a correctional education program.
- II. Workforce Recommendations
  - A. The Department of Correction and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation should examine their present procedures for referral of all inmates with disabilities for possible vocational rehabilitation services. If warranted, the two entities should develop a recommendation for program continuation and expansion.
  - B. The Department of Correction in collaboration with the Division of Professional-Technical Education should develop an action plan on improving professional-technical opportunities to include expanding sites and opportunities for training.
    - 1. Look at all locations.
    - 2. Expand short-term, work-based technical education.
  - C. The Governor's office should add a Department of Correction representative to the Workforce Development Council.
- III. The Department of Correction should review internal collaboration among the Education Services Bureau, the rest of Institutional Services, Field and Community Services, Correctional Industries, and the Division of Prisons in light of the issues identified in the educational audit.
- IV. The State Board of Correction should develop measures and tracking for post incarceration success and incorporate a reduction of recidivism rates into the performance goals throughout Corrections.
- V. The State Board of Correction should develop an appropriate education assessment and outcome process that measures individual student accomplishment in a correctional setting.
  - A. This needs to be compatible with State Board of Education reporting requirements

- VI. Programs should be designed and delivered to appropriately meet the critical rehabilitation needs of all the inmates.
- VII. Ongoing communication should be established among the Board of Education, Board of Correction and Juvenile Corrections.
- VIII. Recommendations on further committee actions should be developed and presented to the appropriate governing bodies.

# **Original Recommendations Approved By The State Board of Education November 1999**

At the November 1999 meeting of the State Board of Education, Mr. James Hammond made the following motion (which was seconded by Dr. Tom Dillon and carried 7-0 by the State Board of Education): To continue the Corrections Education Subcommittee to define the key issues identified in the recommendations (listed below), implement the recommendations as appropriate and develop additional recommendations to propose to the appropriate agency, be that Juvenile Corrections, adult corrections or State Board of Education. The committee will function for one year, will report to the 70% Committee and then be reviewed. The committee will consist of the Corrections Subcommittee and additional members from the Department of Labor and Legislative Education Committee. The initial meeting will be to develop a budget, identify funding resources and report back to the Board.

## **Assets, needs and recommendations identified by the Corrections Education Subcommittee.**

### **A. Assets**

1. Adult Corrections - adequate program structure with correctional educational/program staff with special expertise. Juvenile and adult corrections staff have special expertise in working with problem students
2. Adult Corrections have completed plans for program improvement
3. Adult Corrections - good partnership with Department of Education, esp. with federal grants
4. Idaho public is interested in what is done in the adult and juvenile corrections systems
5. County juvenile corrections centers are aligned with school districts
6. Aggressive public education reading program will help with prevention
7. Agreements are being established to facilitate cooperation and efficiency
8. School counselors.

### **B. Needs**

1. Department of Corrections, Department of Juvenile Corrections and Department of Education need a regular forum for addressing common problems
2. Better educate public on what works and how resources are being used and to develop ownership in the problem
3. Explore alternative systems for the delivery of corrections education.
4. Need resources to address recognized program deficiencies and unmet needs
  - (a) Accreditation recommendations
  - (b) Expand educational programs
  - (c) Public relations campaign
5. Common accountability measures

6. Financial responsibility for juveniles in the detention centers needs to be a broader responsibility than the individual school district
7. Provide startup costs for educational programs in county juvenile facilities

C. Recommendations

1. Department of Corrections, Juvenile Corrections, Department of Education, Division of Professional-Technical Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation collaborate in developing an action plan for improving educational services; this would be reported to the Board of Education
2. Provide regular times for addressing correctional education issues on the State Board agenda (70% committee)
3. Develop a joint research project to better identify the demographics of the population all of the entities are trying to serve
4. Create a clear picture/model of who does what
  - (a) Write a grant to create a collaborative model
5. Establish and/or identify funding for year around schools in county juvenile corrections facilities; this is an unfunded mandate
6. Create better transitions between the systems
7. Address needs of 16 to 18 year-olds who are between systems and for which the public schools no longer feel responsible or can afford
8. Better educate public school staff on warning signs and interventions to help keep students out of the correctional system
9. State needs to have a good statewide system to deal with substance abuse issues
  - (a) Education
  - (b) Health and Welfare
  - (c) Corrections
  - (d) Juvenile Corrections
10. Explore professional-technical education and vocational rehabilitation options with the correctional industries
11. Department of Corrections Education Programs Bureau and Offender Programs Bureau staff believe many offenders can change, return to society, and be successful. They also believe the likelihood of success increases when education and treatment are combined in a comprehensive inmate program plan with proper assessment and review. IDOC's correctional program and educational professionals will carry this philosophy into their future activities and will encourage others in its wisdom. Our recommendation is that the State Board of Education and Juvenile Corrections adopt a similar message and help us move forward accordingly.