

**School Related Problems Confronting New Jersey Youth
Returning to Local Communities and Schools From Juvenile
Detention Facilities and Juvenile Justice Commission Programs**

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I. INTRODUCTION

This paper identifies a number of school related problems confronting New Jersey youth returning to local communities and schools from juvenile detention facilities and Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) programs and makes recommendations for improving the educational achievement of these youth. As many of the issues that confront youth returning from JJC residential commitments are the same or similar to those that impact youth returning to local schools from juvenile detention facilities and even placements in JJC day programs, this paper addresses broadly issues facing youth returning from JJC and juvenile detention facility programs to schools and communities. However, it also recognizes the special challenges facing older youth re-entering communities from JJC commitments and the need to develop intensive educational programs that can address their particular needs.

II. METHODOLOGY

Preparation for writing this paper included a review of unpublished and published papers on juvenile re-entry and juvenile education, very helpful conversations with national experts, interviews with State and local administrators, educators, and other service providers from juvenile justice and education programs, and a review of State and county data related to youth involved in the juvenile justice system in New Jersey.

Unfortunately, data required to draw an accurate picture of the educational achievement of this population is not available. Nevertheless, data on recidivism rates and anecdotal accounts permit reasonable conclusions about their poor educational achievement. Although I did not conduct a formal assessment or study of the educational systems that serve these youth, I was able to identify problems common in many counties and municipalities, urban and suburban, throughout the State.

Although somewhat tentative, my findings are sufficiently grounded to direct the attention of policy makers, administrators and service providers to potentially serious problems that limit the educational achievement of youth returning to communities and schools from juvenile justice programs.

III. DESCRIPTION OF POPULATION

What follows is a summary description of youth who return to schools and communities from local detention facilities and JJC residential and day programs based upon actual data or anecdotal information where data was not available. A more complete and thorough description of youth involved in JJC residential programs is provided in the paper presented to this Roundtable by Bruce D. Stout, Ph.D.

Roughly, around 64,000 youth under eighteen years old are arrested each year in New Jersey.¹ Of those arrested, 18,163 were adjudicated delinquent in 2002.² About 26% of adjudicated youth are under 15, 44% 15 -16, and 29% 17. Although African Americans comprised about 13% of New Jersey's population in 2000,³ African American youth made up about 40% of youth arrested in 2001 and 43% of adjudicated youth. Females accounted for 19% of adjudicated youth.⁴

In 2002, 12,732 juveniles between the ages of 10 and 20, most of whom were between 14 and 17, were admitted to juvenile detention facilities.⁵ On average throughout the State, these youth were detained for about 27 days, but some are detained for substantially longer and some more than once. Most were male, but about 15% female. About 62% of youth admitted to juvenile detention facilities were African American and about 19% were Hispanic⁶. By far the highest number of juveniles are detained in Camden, Essex and Hudson counties (about 46% of the total) and better than 75% are detained in those three counties plus Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Passaic and Union.

In 2002, 1,259 juveniles were committed to and entered JJC residential facilities, 412 juveniles were placed in JJC residential facilities as "probationers," and 295 were placed in JJC operated day programs.⁷ Nearly all committed juveniles were male. Only about 7% were female. Of committed youth, about 32% were 16 or younger when they entered, another 29% 17, and the remaining 39% 18 or over. 67% were African American and 18% Hispanic. Camden alone

¹Arrest data was derived from the Uniform Crime Report, State of New Jersey, 2001 (UCR 2001).

²Adjudication data was provided by the New Jersey Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), which derived the data from the Family Automated Case Tracking System (FACTS).

³U.S. Census Bureau.

⁴Although not discussed in this paper, it is important to note that about 250 and possibly more juveniles are waived from Family Court to the Criminal Court and prosecuted as adults each year according to data provided by AOC.

⁵Data regarding admissions to juvenile detention facilities was furnished by JJC. Although data regarding age of admission was not available, age ranges were derived from estimates by staff of JJC and a juvenile detention facility. Data regarding juveniles admitted to juvenile detention facilities do not include youth sentenced to Detention Commitment Programs that are operated by seven counties and total 699 per year.

⁶In 2000, Hispanics comprised 13.3% of the general population in New Jersey. U.S. Census Bureau.

⁷Data related to youth committed to or placed in JJC residential and day programs was provided by JJC.

committed 25.7% of these youth and Camden, Essex, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex, and Passaic counties combined committed almost 75%.

Nearly 900 youth are on active parole at any given time.⁸ Upon release, about 13% are under 18, about 41% are 18 or 19, and 47% are over 19.

Youth that are committed to JJC programs come with a high number of individual and community risk factors (see Bruce Stout's paper). Not surprisingly, many of these youth experienced serious education problems before admission to JJC residential facilities. According to a study produced a few years ago for the JJC, 51% had been classified before being committed, 44.5% had not been attending school prior to admission and 41.6% were reported to have been expelled from school. Many according to anecdotal reports start JJC commitments with no academic credit.

Although I was not able to find data regarding the characteristics of youth in juvenile detention facilities, anecdotal reports suggested that their profile is very similar, although they on average are younger and have fewer and less serious offenses. The extent to which they share risk factors is not certain.

While there is no data regarding the rates at which youth placed in juvenile justice programs complete their education or earn high school diplomas, GEDs, or other credentials demonstrating satisfactory completion of their education, it is widely believed that few JJC parolees complete their education and many if not most of the youth admitted to detention facilities experience serious educational problems and likely drop out or are pushed out of public schools before earning a degree.

IV. SCHOOL RELATED PROBLEMS

There are a number of school related problems in New Jersey that make it particularly difficult for returning youth to successfully complete their education. These problems can vary in degree from short enrollment delays to complete exclusion from school, but even relatively minor problems can result in serious setbacks for members of this vulnerable population. Multiple problems can almost guarantee failure. Although the degree and extent of school related problems that confront any given youth would depend on where that youth is returning from and where he is returning to, there are a number problems that are common throughout New Jersey in both urban and suburban communities. While juvenile justice and school officials for the most part are aware of these problems, and in some cases have made efforts to address them, most of these problems have not been adequately addressed. What follows is a description of these common problems.

⁸Parole data was provided by JJC.

A. Lack of Attention Paid to Returning Youth by State and Local Education Officials

Perhaps the greatest problem is that despite their legal responsibility for educating these youth, State and local education officials pay little attention to the educational problems of returning youth. Our Constitution requires State and local education officials to provide a “thorough and efficient system of free public schools” for the instruction of all children between the ages of five and eighteen. The Supreme Court has interpreted a "Constitutionally adequate education" as “one which will prepare public school children for a meaningful role in society and enable them to compete effectively in the economy and contribute and participate as citizens and members of their communities.” Abbott v. Burke, 149 N.J. 145 (1997). By statute, our public schools must be available to all children residing in New Jersey between the ages of five and twenty, N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1, and every child age six through sixteen is compelled to regularly attend schools, N.J.S.A. 18A:37-25. Pursuant to Federal and State special education laws, children with disabilities are also entitled to an appropriate education until they reach the age of 21, including instruction and services necessary to assist them in the transition to adulthood.

Yet, the State has taken little action to address the particular needs of these youth and, although some district and county school officials are keenly aware of the problems facing these juveniles, they have implemented few if any programs designed to meet their needs. This is unfortunate not only because our State public school system is required to educate these youth, but because they have the expertise and resources needed to design and implement appropriate programs. Any effective solutions in New Jersey must substantially involve State and local school officials.

B. Resistance to the Readmission of Returning Youth in Local Programs

Local school officials are often reluctant to permit the readmission of re-entering youth. This is in part because most have histories of attendance, discipline or academic problems in their districts. School officials are especially reluctant to readmit these students if they are older and have few credits because the odds are against them graduating from a traditional high school program and they typically have concerns about placing them in classes with younger students. In today’s climate where schools are judged by test scores, there is additional pressure to exclude re-entering youth who often fair poorly on standardized tests. As a result, many re-entering youth, some as young as sixteen, despite their right to attend public schools, are discouraged from re-enrolling in public schools and encouraged to drop out. School officials refer to this as “counseling” or “signing out” students. Such students are usually referred to local adult schools, which do not provide an education comparable to a public high school and are not designed to meet the needs of most of these students.

Other students may face scheduling or technical difficulties in meeting enrollment requirements that cause long delays or can defeat attempts to return to school. Students are generally required to re-enroll after being absent for more than 45 days and districts do not expedite this process for re-entering youth. Appointments may be scheduled weeks after an initial attempt to return to school is made. If an appointment is missed, which is not uncommon, the student may need to schedule another appointment. Even when an appointment is made, enrollment or admission is

often denied because of technical deficiencies related to documents supporting student applications, even though school residency laws require that students be enrolled immediately and admitted to district programs if they demonstrate residency, regardless of other deficiencies in their applications, N.J.A.C. 6A:28-2.4 to 2.6.

Other students might be enrolled but nevertheless excluded from school for substantial periods of time and offered little or no instruction. For example, a student might be excluded from school pending placement in a different program.

Delays or difficulties in the enrollment process also often stem from other problems discussed below. Whatever the cause, these problems can leave students idle, unsupervised and without appropriate educational services causing them to fall further behind in their educational progress. Such difficulties can be experienced as rejection and during this critical time for re-entering youth increase the likelihood that they will never re-enroll and will re-offend.

C. Failure to Accept Credits Earned at JJC and Detention Facility Schools

Many districts do not accept credits earned by youth at detention facility and JJC schools. Some districts are reluctant to accept these credits because they are generally skeptical of the educational programs offered in these schools. Some resistance though stems from inconsistencies between juvenile justice and district programs. For example, some districts will not accept credits earned in a course that does not correspond in title, content or structure (e.g., not a regular semester course) to one offered in the district. Some districts also will not accept partial credit. So, if a student earns 2 ½ credits in a course in a juvenile justice program, he or she might not be allowed to transfer the credit to a local district.

D. Timing and Attendance

Students often experience great difficulty in returning to local districts when they are released in the middle of a semester. Because students usually are not allowed or able to transfer partial credit earned in juvenile justice programs, earn partial credit from districts or make up work missed, it is impossible for them to pass their classes after enrolling in the middle of a marking period. Hence, even if a student is permitted to re-enroll in the middle of a semester, that student might not be motivated to attend classes and complete assignments because he or she might have no chance of passing his or her classes and earning credit.

Students detained for relatively short but nevertheless substantial periods of time can also experience attendance related problems. Although they should not be, students sometime are marked absent for time spent in detention facilities. Many districts automatically deny credit to students after a certain number of absences, as few as nine in at least one district. Absences caused by detentions sometimes therefore result in an automatic denial of credit. However, even if credit is not denied automatically, students usually are not given credit for work completed in detention facilities and they often are not allowed to make up missed work.

There are often timing problems related to other programs to which re-entering youth are

sometimes referred, such as GED or adult school programs. Sometimes these programs do not accept students during the middle of a semester or month so that a student referred to such a program might have to wait for the program's registration period before he or she can return to school.

E. Lack of Appropriate Programs and Services in Local District and County Education Programs

A fundamental problem is the absence of appropriate programs and services in local districts and counties and unwillingness on the part of districts to fund such programs when they are available. It is difficult to know the extent of this problem in part because no one gathers information regarding the number and type of alternative programs operated in the State nor the number of students enrolled in them. The experience of many if not most re-entering youth, however, is that districts do not place them in appropriate alternatives or in general educational settings with the kind of support that is needed to meet their needs.

Although districts and counties do sometimes operate alternative programs, these programs are often designed for other populations and not available to re-entering youth. Other programs to which re-entering youth are frequently referred, such as adult schools and GED programs, generally are not designed or appropriate for this population. Some programs such as twilight programs, which can offer a full academic program with a flexible schedule (permitting students to meet employment or child care responsibilities), can work very well for the more mature of these students, but do not offer the kind of programs and support that many require to succeed.

Even though there are excellent vocational schools in the State, most will not accept re-entering youth or they have entrance requirements that effectively disqualify them. For example, most will not accept a student midyear or after the student's freshmen or sophomore year. They also will not accept a student with attendance or academic problems and have waiting lists. Districts and counties do not operate vocational programs designed to serve students with needs like those of re-entering youth.

F. Inconsistency in Detention Facility, JJC and Local Education Programs

Inconsistencies exist in programs operated by detention facility, JJC and local district schools. These inconsistencies exist in a wide range of program elements such as schedules, classroom structure, curricula and teaching methods. As already mentioned, inconsistencies can cause problems with enrollment and transfer of credits. Other problems are created as well. Detention facility and JJC school programs are described as having smaller classes, more structure, more individualized instruction and a more nurturing atmosphere. Although this can work well for these students while in these programs, they often have a difficult time readjusting to the more traditional large classroom and regular high school expectations when they return to district programs.

G. Failure to Timely Transfer of Records and Information

Problems related to the transfer of records and information to and from the juvenile justice system also create problems for re-entering youth. Districts sometimes do not timely send complete records to detention facility and JJC schools that are necessary to provide appropriate programs and services. Similarly, upon release from juvenile justice programs, complete records and information may not get to the right school in a timely manner or to community-based service providers who need the information to provide support.

H. Failure to Include Local School Officials in After Care Transition Planning

A critical problem is that local school officials are not included in the after care or transition planning process. Hence, programs in JJC schools are not adequately linked to school programs that students come from or will return to when they are released. Moreover, when youth leave JJC commitments, educational programs are not in place for them and records cannot readily be sent to the programs that will eventually serve them. While a new partnership between the JJC and Paterson School District plans to include District representatives in the transition planning process, this effort is just beginning. Until this problem is corrected, significant difficulties will continue and gaps will occur in the education of these youth. Although transitional support programs for re-entering youth are very helpful and necessary, they only ameliorate and cannot eliminate the problems caused by the failure to include local school officials in the transition planning process.

I. Quality of Detention Facility and JJC Education Programs

Nationally, it is not uncommon for there to be significant problems with the quality of programs in schools that serve youth detained in or committed to juvenile justice residential programs. While I did not seek specific information about the quality of these programs in New Jersey, I did learn of substantial variation in the quality of county detention facility schools. For example, although youth may remain in detention facilities for months at a time waiting for their case to be adjudicated and then to be placed in a JJC program, in at least one county it was reported that they often did not receive more than a few hours of instruction per week and were not allowed to have books in their cells. While it was also reported that the problems in that county were corrected as the result of intervention by the JJC, it is not known whether other problems exist in other counties. If it has not already been done, it would be useful to have a thorough and independent assessment completed of the quality of JJC and detention facility school programs.

J. Special Education Problems

Similarly, while it was beyond the scope of this paper to assess special education procedures and services within detention facility and JJC schools, a few critical problems were identified. Given the high number and percentage of youth placed in juvenile justice programs who are classified as having an educational disability, or who might have psychological conditions that qualify them for special education services, these problems impact a significant portion of the youth in these programs.

It is critical for a student suspected of having an educational disability, whether emotional, behavioral, cognitive, or learning, who is detained in a juvenile justice program to receive as early as possible a thorough and comprehensive child study team (CST) evaluation if the student does not already have a current one available. This evaluation is needed not only to determine if the student is eligible for special education and related services, but also to determine whether a juvenile justice placement is appropriate and if diversion is possible.

Special education services are available not only to children with learning disabilities, but to children with emotional, behavioral and neurological disorders that substantially impact education. Disability related attendance, discipline and social problems may qualify a student for special education and related services, which include not only specially designed instruction and therapies such as occupational, physical and speech therapies, but mental health services and social skills training. All these services, if needed for a child with a disability to benefit from his or her education, should be available from local districts. If students with disabilities were diverted from juvenile justice residential programs when local districts can appropriately serve them, it would help to reduce their disproportionately high numbers in these programs.

Of course, complete and thorough CST evaluations are also necessary to ensure that students with disabilities receive appropriate instruction and services while in juvenile justice programs, which will help to ensure that they are better prepared to return to community schools when they are released.

A serious problem exists with respect to the transition of classified students from juvenile justice to district school programs. Federal and State special education laws require that students with disabilities have a current written individualized education program (IEP) and that the IEP be implemented at all times. Gaps in services are not permitted. If a student with an IEP from a JJC program re-enters a community, the local district in that community cannot disregard the IEP, but must implement it faithfully until it revises the IEP through appropriate procedures. If it cannot fully implement the IEP, it must implement it to the extent possible and hold a CST meeting within thirty days to review and appropriately revise the IEP. Once these changes are made, they too must be implemented without undue delay. If a change in placement is required, an appropriate program must be implemented pending the change.

Unfortunately, many districts disregard IEPs developed in juvenile justice school programs when students return to local schools and either do not serve or place them in inappropriate home instruction programs pending the development of new IEPs. Sometimes, development of the IEP is delayed pending completion of a new CST evaluation, which should not take more than 90 days to complete, but often takes longer.

These problems could be avoided if local CST members were included in transitional CST meetings for classified children before they leave juvenile justice school programs. This would ensure that classified children leave these programs with IEPs that will be implemented by local districts and afford local officials an opportunity to secure appropriate placements before students are return. Although JJC officials have communicated with some county

superintendents about problems related to special education, and discussions have “opened some doors” in this area, substantial work is still needed.

K. Failure to Collect Data Related to the Educational Performance of Youth

Despite the importance of education for re-entering youth, no one actually collects data related to their participation in or completion of educational programs after they leave juvenile justice programs. This information is important for obtaining an accurate understanding of what is happening to these youth and for learning more about what programs are effective in helping them succeed educationally.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCREASING THE EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT OF YOUTH RETURNING TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND SCHOOLS FROM JUVENILE JUSTICE PROGRAMS

The following recommendations are made with respect to reforms needed to improve the educational achievement of youth returning to communities and schools from juvenile justice programs.

A. Procedural Problems Should be Corrected

State and local officials from juvenile justice and education agencies should address the specific procedural problems discussed above related to the resistance of local school officials to re-enroll or readmit students returning to local programs, the failure of districts to accept credits earned at JJC and detention facility schools, the timing of return, short-term detentions and attendance, inconsistencies among detention facility, JJC and local education programs, delays in the transfer of records and information between juvenile justice and district programs, the failure to include local school officials in after care transition planning, and special education evaluation and IEP procedures.

B. Educational Programs Should be Developed for Older Youth Returning to Local Communities and Schools

State and local officials from juvenile justice and education agencies should develop programs for older youth re-entering communities from JJC residential programs. These youth are at very high risk of re-offending and being recommitted to juvenile or adult correctional facilities. Although there is not sufficient evidence to say that education can prevent recidivism, school failure is strongly correlated with recidivism and engagement in school and educational success are widely regarded as strong protective factors. Moreover, whether these youth re-offend or not, unless they complete their education, they are likely to find it extremely difficult or impossible to secure meaningful employment or assume and enjoy other adult responsibilities in the future. Yet no districts, counties or municipalities have adequate programs to serve the educational needs of this population. Twilight and adult programs to which these youth are often referred are not designed and do not have the capacity to meet the needs of most of these students. GED programs too are not appropriate. Transitional services, while helpful and

necessary, do not substitute for a full program.

These youth need programs with intensive and comprehensive services to address their academic, psychological, developmental, social, vocational, health and other needs. Academic instruction should be based on best practices with respect to literacy and be able to address learning, cognitive and organizational skills and not just rote operations. These programs must be creative in trying to motivate and capture the imaginations of students who have failed in other school settings. These educational programs should be more concrete and project focused and should relate to student interests. Importantly, these programs must have an effective vocational component with a close link to jobs in the local economy if not an actual job component in which students can earn money. Flexibility to accommodate employment and family responsibilities is also necessary. Ideally, a variety of programs and services would be available to meet the varying needs of different students.

This type of program can be effectively operated by different agencies. Examples exist of such programs being operated principally by juvenile justice, local or state education agencies or jointly by juvenile justice and education agencies. Other examples exist of charter schools or community-based organizations operating such programs. However, in light of the multiple services, levels of expertise and resources necessary to successfully operate such programs, they work best when services are provided and supported by cooperative, collaborative and creative relationships amongst a variety of public, community-based and private organizations (including some who are not involved directly with juvenile justice issues such as the Labor Department and the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services) who can bring to bear their expertise, ideas and resources. Programs work best when generated locally and tailored to the specific needs and resources of the local population, community and region.

C. Educational Programs Should be Developed for Younger Youth Re-entering Communities

Local districts and county education agencies should develop, expand or improve an array of programs and services for younger youth returning to communities and schools from detention facilities and JJC residential and day programs. Some of these students will need traditional alternative programs with smaller class sizes, more individualized instruction, different teaching styles, more structure, greater flexibility and the availability of services to address emotional and behavioral problems, but will not need programs as intensive as the higher risk older youth returning from JJC residential programs. Others can be served within the general education setting, but may need extra support such as mental health services to address family, peer or individual issues.

These students may also benefit from transitional support services that may help to bridge the gap between the juvenile justice system and general education setting. However, if such transitional programs are provided, they should not be used as a substitute for appropriate programs, should not result in the loss of opportunities to earn credits and should strive to move students into appropriate programs as soon as possible.

Programs for this younger population, particularly in the larger urban centers, as well as more generally in Abbott districts, are important because they would substantially reduce the need for subsequent juvenile detentions or commitments. The development of an appropriate array of these less intensive but critical support programs in these communities should reduce the substantial over representation of African American students in juvenile justice residential programs.

D. Juvenile Justice Program Schools Should be Thoroughly Assessed

If one has not already been completed, a thorough and independent assessment of educational programs offered by JJC and detention facility schools should be completed to determine if they are adequately addressing the academic, vocational, cognitive and social needs of youth they serve. The assessment should consider basic elements such as hours of instruction, class size, curricula, books and materials, staffing levels and staff credentials, as well as broader issues related to instructional strategies and educational climate. It should also review special education procedures and services. It should assess the availability of necessary support services such as mental health and drug treatment. The assessment should also consider the relationship between these programs and district programs and requirements. Finally, it should consider larger structural issues that might impact any program deficiencies like how the programs are administered, financed and monitored.

E. Data Should be Collected Regarding the Educational Performance of Re-entering Youth

The JJC and AOC should collect, analyze and report data regarding the participation of youth returning from JJC programs and detention centers in local educational programs and their success in completing these programs. For example, data should be collected regarding how many returning youth enroll in general, alternative, transition, adult or vocational education programs, how many participate in a sustained way in these programs, how many complete these programs and how many achieve a high school diploma, GED or other appropriate degree or certificate. Data should also be kept on how many of these youth drop out of school and how many are able to secure and maintain meaningful employment without completing their education. Such data should be broken down by geographic area, district, age, race and ethnicity, and disability.

The collection of this data will not only permit a more accurate understanding of the educational performance of youth released from juvenile justice programs, but will enable juvenile justice, education and other agency and community representatives to assess the effectiveness of programs, support those that work and change or eliminate those that do not.

F. A Sub-Committee of Urban Centers and Counties That Serve the Greatest Number of Returning Youth Should be Convened to Address Special Problems or Needs of Their Communities and Youth

Because such a large and disproportionately minority portion of returning youth come from a small number of large urban centers and counties impacted by high levels and concentrations of poverty and related social problems, a committee of State and local representatives from juvenile justice, education, and other public agencies, community-based organizations and child advocates from these areas should be convened to address the unique problems and needs of their communities and youth. For example, needs and challenges caused by high levels and concentrations of poverty, crime, drug use and unemployment might require special programs, supports and services. The greater number of youth returning to these districts and counties might permit the development of more specialized programs. While these communities might have more resources overall, they might also have fewer resources per needy child. These large urban districts may already have developed and implemented programs that can be shared with each other to address common problems. This committee should be utilized to address the recommendations made in sub-parts A, B and C, above.

G. The State Department of Education Should Provide Specific Guidelines to Abbott Districts Regarding the Development of Programs and Services to Address the Needs of Returning Youth

Because it has been estimated that about two-thirds of returning youth come from Abbott communities and because Abbott districts have both the opportunity and obligation to address demonstrable needs of special populations within their districts, the State Department of Education should provide Abbott districts with specific guidelines regarding how to assess and identify the needs of this population and based on this assessment how to develop appropriate programs and obtain necessary funding. Such may include an array programs and services already available or required under the Abbott decisions, such as school-based social and health services and alternative education programs, or the creation of special programs designed to meet the unique needs of this population.

H. Advocacy

While the elimination or substantial reduction in problems discussed in this paper are most likely to come from the voluntary, cooperative, creative and hard work of public officials, community-based service providers, representatives from private enterprise and child advocates, advocacy will still be needed to help individual youth with problems that will inevitably arise. Included in programs and services for these youth should be individual advocacy services.

In addition to individual advocacy, efforts may be needed to challenge unlawful and harmful practices and policies that State and local juvenile justice and education agencies are not willing to change. For example, policies and practices that do not permit youth with educational disabilities who are in juvenile justice programs or are returning to districts from such programs

to receive a free appropriate public education might violate State and Federal special education laws. Policies and practices that prevent any student, including youth involved in the juvenile justice system, up to the age of twenty, from receiving a thorough and efficient education from our public schools might also violate the State constitution and State laws and regulations. Legal challenges may be helpful in eliminating such practices.

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Helpful websites:

Annie E. Casey Foundation Publications lists related to education and juvenile justice
www.aecf.org/publications/

Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice Publications
www.cjcj.org/pubs

The Eastern Kentucky University College of Justice & Safety's Training Resource Center (TRC)
<http://www.trc.eku.edu>

The Hamilton Fish National Institute on School and Community Violence
<http://www.gwu.edu/~hfni>

National Center on Education, Disability and Juvenile Justice
<http://www.edjj.org/>

National Council on Disability research study entitled *Addressing the Needs of Youth with Disabilities in the Juvenile Justice System: The Status of Evidence-Based Research*
www.ncd.gov/newsroom/publications/juvenile.html

National Criminal Justice Reference Service Virtual Library
<http://fulltextpubs.ncjrs.org/content/>

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
<http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org>