

OCE/CEA
Three State Recidivism Study

Preliminary Summary Report

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by

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Introduction

In 1997, the Office of Correctional Education of the U.S. Department of Education provided funding to the Correctional Education Association to evaluate the effect of education on the rate of recidivism and on post-release employment. The study was conducted in three states – Maryland, Minnesota and Ohio – and examined a sample of more than 3,000 inmates released between September 1997 and December of 1998.

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The CEA's preliminary results from the OCE/CEA Three State Recidivism Study reveal a statistically significant correlation between participation in education and a lower rate of recidivism in each state. At present, the data concerning the rate of employment has not been fully collected or analyzed. When completed, the OCE/CEA study should answer the following questions about the relationship between correctional education and recidivism:

- A. Overall, what effect does participation in correctional education programming have on the rate of recidivism?
- B. What variables have the greatest impact on the rate of recidivism? (Such variables include age, criminal history, family background, substance abuse, and educational and employment background.)
- C. What types of correctional education programming (academic, vocational and life skills) have the greatest effect on the rate of recidivism?
- D. How do levels of participation in correctional education programming (as measured in total hours in class and diplomas and certificates received) affect the rate of recidivism?
- E. Does participation in correctional education affect institutional behavior?
- F. What is the relationship between correctional education participation and post-release employment?

Methodology

While legal and ethical concerns prevent randomly assigning inmate subjects to treatment and control groups, the OCE/CEA Three State Recidivism study employs a quasi-experimental design to reduce threats to the validity of the study findings. Because the study participants are a release cohort, that is the cohort included everyone released from a state's correctional system within a set timeframe, it can be assumed that the comparison group does not differ systematically from the treatment group on important variables. This allows the researcher to draw conclusions about the impact of the treatment on the outcome measure with a reduced threat to validity. The design also includes survey questions on inmate motivation and statistical modeling to address questions of sample selection bias and to increase the rigor of the research.

Sample Selection

The sample is made up of more than 3,000 inmates from Maryland, Minnesota and Ohio. The original design called for a sample of 1,000 from each of the three participating states, but oversampling was conducted purposefully to make up for any surveys that may have been completed in an unreadable manner. In Maryland, the sample consisted of a randomly selected co-hort of inmates released between August of 1997 and December of 1997. 1,040 inmates actually took the prerelease survey. (All inmates were given the chance to refuse to take the survey.) Because Minnesota releases far fewer inmates than the other two states, it took the researchers in

Minnesota from August of 1997 to December of 1998 to survey 1,069 releases. While Ohio releases approximately 1,000 inmates a month, the cohort surveyed was not randomly selected. The study design called for all institutions in the state to be included in the survey, but the Ohio researchers chose to take a sample from institutions chosen on the basis of location. The Ohio sample was compared with all of the releases during the cohort release period and found no significant difference in key variables between the study sample and all releasees.

In all three states, inmates from super maximum institutions, parole violators, and inmates with sentences of six months or less were excluded from the sample because they would not have had the opportunity to participate in correctional education programming.

Data Instruments and Measures

There were five sources of data for this study; three main data collection instruments and offender employment histories and offender criminal histories. The three main instruments include the PreRelease Survey, the Inmate Base File Data Collection Form, and the Parole/Release Officer Survey. Each instrument is described below and copies of the instruments are attached.

PreRelease Survey

The first stage of the study called for all the subjects (1,000 inmates within three months of release from each of the three states) to take the prerelease survey. The pre-release survey was expanded from the demographics, skill levels, and attitudes toward education discussed in the initial proposal, to also include adult and juvenile criminal history, other programming enrollment, employment during incarceration, social learning variables, key recidivism factors, and post-release residence, employment and criminal justice (probation/parole/supervised release) information.

The prerelease survey consisted of sixty questions chosen to elicit information pertinent to recidivism factors and participation in educational programming. The questions covered the following areas:

- A. Family Background, including 12 questions on such topics as the number of children, marital status and family criminal history.
- B. Employment Background, including six questions to determine the inmate's employment history and his or her financial stability.

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- C. Criminal History, including eight questions on prior criminal activities, including the age at first arrest, juvenile incarceration history, and other information not obtainable through the criminal record system.
- D. Correctional Education Programming and Education Background, including seventeen questions on academic and vocational education, both before and during incarceration, and questions meant to determine attitudes towards education and motivation. In this grouping were also questions about other programming the inmate received during incarceration, such as substance abuse or sexual offender treatment, job assignments, and prison industry participation.
- E. Release Information, including seven questions on the inmate's plans for release, including employment prospects, housing and documents such as a photo id and legal social security number.

Inmate Base File Data Collection Form

Researchers reviewed inmate institutional and educational files for the entire study cohort, and not just a sample as originally planned in the proposal. The data collected included the crime and sentence length of current incarceration, basic demographic information such as race, gender and age, number of felony arrests and convictions, major institutional infractions as a measure of institutional adjustment, programming and employment while incarcerated, and prerelease information. While much of this information was requested of the inmates in the prerelease survey, it was determined that because the survey was self-report, a verification of that data would enhance the veracity of the data. Also included in this instrument were the education records. The education records, for those subjects enrolled in academic and vocational education programs, include information on level of participation from first date of entry into the program to final exit from the program, the number of diplomas and/or certificates received, and whether enrollment was mandatory, court ordered, or voluntary. A Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) score from the beginning of the inmate's incarceration and an exit TABE score obtained when the inmate took the prerelease survey was recorded for all participants in the study, whether or not they were enrolled in correctional education programming.

Parole/Release Officer Survey

The parole/release officer survey asked ten questions related to post release behavior and employment. The topics included the parolee's participation in education, training, substance abuse treatment and counseling after release. From preliminary reports, it is expected that the completion rate for these surveys will be nearly 100%.

Data Collection

The prerelease survey was administered by individuals who did not work in the institution from which the inmate was to be released. In Maryland, teachers from an institution that was in lock-down status administered the survey. While all of the inmates within three months of release were asked to report to take the survey, they were given the chance to refuse to participate. The same group of inmates who completed the prerelease survey also were asked to take the TABE. As most inmates had taken the TABE at the beginning of their incarceration, the administration of the TABE shortly before the release of the inmate allows the TABE scores to be used as a pre and post measure of academic achievement while incarcerated.

Maryland has completed the collection of the education records and should complete the collection of the rest of the information shortly. All of the Maryland inmates released on parole have been followed up either six months or twelve months after release. Their parole officers answered a ten question survey about employment, education and training. Criminal history records for all Maryland have been retrieved from their respective state agencies. In Maryland, the state department of labor has agreed to provide employment data as reported by social security number for the released inmates. This source of employment data should be the most reliable available.

Preliminary Data Analysis

The data set for this study was collected in a variety of formats from five different sources:

Inmate Exit Survey

Parole Officer Survey

Criminal History Information

Institutional/Educational Records

Employment Information

Currently the database contains over 425 variables, but it is anticipated that approximately 25 more will be added once the employment data has been gathered. The employment data set will be collected from state departments responsible for social security/labor records. This data will provide follow-up employment information after release to assess the impact of correctional education on employment.

Aggregate Data from the Inmate Exit Survey for Maryland, Minnesota and Ohio

Demographics and Family Background

- Approximately 60% of study participants live in a city.
- 70% have one or more dependents.

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- 65% have children under the age of 18
- 48% are responsible for the financial support of children
- 44% received food stamps in the year prior to incarceration
- 23% received AFDC or welfare, and 11% received public housing
- 28% of the participant's families were currently receiving benefits 55% of the study participants have a family history of incarceration

Criminal History

- 70% of the study participants have a history of close friends being incarcerated
- 45% of the study participants report being in jail three times prior to this incarceration
- Nearly 73% of the study participants report being in prison one or more times prior to this incarceration
- Study participants had a mean number of 4.81 felony arrests prior to this incarceration
- The mean age of the study participants at first arrest was 19.72.
- The mean age of the study participant's first involvement with criminal activity was 18.53

Employment History

While the majority of inmates were employed in the year before incarceration, they also had long periods of unemployment. This data reinforces the current emphasis in the offender employment field on job retention, not just on obtaining employment opportunities for ex-offenders.

- 71% of participants reported they were employed full-time or mostly full-time in the year prior to incarceration.
- 73% reported having one or more legal jobs in the year prior to incarceration
- 74% reported periods of unemployment that lasted from one to six months or longer
- 62% reported that they received health care benefits
- 38% received annual or sick leave or unemployment benefits

Education Background

This data shows that the inmates feel very positively about the educational classes offered in the institutions, but to arrive at significant conclusions the data needs to be correlated with data on length of participation, test scores, and degree and certificate completions.

- 54% of the participants reported having an 11th grade education or less
- 42% of the offenders participated in correctional education programs during their incarceration

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- 81% rated the prison academic programs as being of “good to very high quality.”
- Approximately 62% reported that the quality of the teachers was “good or very good.”
- 92% of study participants ranked the vocational programs as “good to very high” in quality
- 64% reported that the quality of the vocational teachers was “good to very good.”
- 88% of those surveyed stated they would recommend prison educational programs to other inmates.
- **Release Plans**
- 76% reported that they had someone outside to help them find a job upon release.
- 84% reported having a place to live upon release.
- 62% planned to live with family
- 49% intended to go back to school upon release
- 53% planned to attend vocational/technical schools or community colleges

Criminal History Data for Maryland, Minnesota and Ohio

The researchers examined three measures of recidivism: re-arrest, re-conviction and re-incarceration. The criminal history data was collected from the National Crime Information Center and state bureaus of criminal history information.

Maryland:	Participants	Non-participants
Re-arrest	52.1%	55.7%
Re-conviction	31.5%	36.0%
Re-incarceration	30.9%	37.7%
Minnesota:	Participants	Non-participants
Re-arrest	42.6%	54.0%
Re-conviction	24.5%	33.8%
Re-incarceration	14.3%	21.5%
Ohio:	Participants	Non-participants
Re-arrest	50.7%	58.2%
Re-conviction	26.1%	33.7%
Re-incarceration	24.4%	31.7%

Aggregate Criminal History Data for Maryland, Minnesota and Ohio

Three States:	Participants	Non-participants
Re-arrest	48.4%	55.9%
Re-conviction	27.3%	34.5%
Re-incarceration	23.2%	30.3%

Conclusions

The OCE/CEA Three State Recidivism study is one of the most comprehensive and rigorous evaluations of the effect of correctional education ever undertaken. The design of the study, with its examination of a release cohort, allows for the circumvention of many of the common pitfalls of recidivism studies including self-selection bias, small sample size, and a lack of a control group. The study, with 245+ variables, contains a wealth of information to be mined in future reports. A major benefit arising out of this study should be the field's ability to direct educational programming so that the most effective programs reach the most inmates, thereby increasing the positive impact of education on the rate of recidivism. Preliminary results argue strongly for a broad range of programs, including vocational education, life skills and parenting classes. As more data becomes available, and the analysis becomes more detailed and allows for comparisons across the three states, the research will continue to grow in importance to the field.

Acknowledgments

A study of this size and complexity could never have been undertaken without the assistance of a great many people. First and foremost, the Correctional Education Association gratefully acknowledges the Office of Correctional Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, of the U.S. Department of Education for its financial support of the project. In particular, CEA wishes to thank Richard Smith, former director of the OCE, and his staff for their efforts on behalf of the study. The CEA also wishes to thank the personnel of the three states involved in the project. These individuals include Roger Knudson, Scott Olson, and Marcie Sorensen of the Minnesota Department of Corrections; Reggie Wilkinson and Jerry McGlone of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, and David Jenkins and Tom Stough of the Maryland Division of Correction. In addition, much effort was exerted by the principals and teachers in the systems of all three states and the CEA thanks each and every one of you profusely.

Appendix

Background Information

Maryland Department of Public Safety and Corrections

The Maryland Department of Public Safety and Corrections is one of Maryland's largest state agencies. Within this agency is the Division of Correction with 6,661 staff and 25 state correctional facilities. Maryland has the 14th highest rate of incarceration in the nation and an inmate population as of July, 1998 of 21,977. The demographics of the inmate population are as follows:

Average age: 33.2

Sex: 95% male and 5% female

Race: 77.4% black; 21.5% white, and 1.1 % other

The average sentence is 148.3 months (not including life sentences) and the average length of stay is 50 months.

The major offence distribution includes 5.3% for probation violation; 16% for robbery; 17% for murder; 18% for drug abuse; 12% for assault; 6.8% for burglary; 6% for rape, and 6.9% for larceny. In fiscal year 1998, there were 3,666 major infractions, including 459 assaults on staff and 1,222 inmate on inmate assaults, 988 drug uses, and 472 weapons.

The rehabilitative programs offered through the Division of Correction include:

Addictions Programs: Addiction counselors assess and educate inmates about substance abuse, supervise and coordinate volunteers working with self help groups and provide direct group treatment to inmates who wish to work on recovery.

- A. Substance abuse education is a sixteen session group experience challenging beliefs about substance abuse.
- B. Recovery group is an ongoing group addressing release prevention and recovery issues.
- C. Alcoholics Anonymous is a community volunteer led self help group.
- D. Narcotics Anonymous is a community volunteer led self help group.

Social Work Programs: the Division's social work program includes group counseling and individual intervention, aftercare, planning, HIV counseling, psychological assessment, and services to special populations.

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- E. Cognitive Therapy Group is a series of four groups, each twelve to fourteen sessions long, addressing decision-making, communication, relationships and reentry issues.
- F. Parenting is for men and women – a group experience addressing pertinent parenting skills. Women’s issues include childbirth preparation and structured visitation.
- G. Domestic Violence is for victims and perpetrators. The men’s group is six months, meeting weekly. The women’s group is six weeks with an ongoing support group upon completion.
- H. HIV Support is for inmates who are HIV positive. Admission is through social work staff.
- I. HIV Prevention is individual counseling for inmates with high risk behavior.

Inmate Work Programs: Work programs prepare inmates for release by developing skills and a work history.

- J. In 1998, State Use Industries employed 1,306 inmates in 30 programs which produced goods and services for sale to government and nonprofit agencies. The Bureau of Justice Assistance authorizes SUI to partner with private business in manufacturing under Prison Industry Enhancement (PIE).
- K. Work Release is a temporary and conditional release from incarceration to obtain and hold employment in the community. Inmates reimburse the state from their wages for food, room and transportation.
- L. Work crews and road crews provide jobs for an average of 620 inmates per month. State law governs use of inmates for State and county public works projects and authorizes diminution of confinement credits and wages for working inmates.

Maryland Department of Education Correctional Education Program

Since 1978 the Correctional Education Program, a unit of the Maryland Department of Education, has had legal authority for the education and library programs in the Division of Correction. These activities are under the oversight of the Educational Coordinating Council for Correctional Institutions, chaired by the State Superintendent of Schools. Each correctional institution is headed by a warden or superintendent. The school principal heads the education program at each site and sits on the warden’s leadership team. The teachers report directly to the principal, but are subject to all the personnel regulations for Division of Correction employees. In the case of a personnel or jurisdictional problem, there is an Educational Liaison working for the Division of Correction who arbitrates between the two agencies.

During the course of fiscal year 1999, 10,063 inmates were enrolled as students. Program goals include attainment of functional literacy skills, attainment of a high school diploma, or attainment of a certification of completion for an entry level occupational education program. During fiscal 1999, 753 inmate students completed occupational training, 1,336 earned literacy certificates, and 951 earned high school diplomas. In addition to those inmates engaged as students, an additional 544 inmates were employed as educational aides assisting with the school and library programs as their daily work assignment.

The Department relies primarily on a State general fund appropriation to support these school and library services. Federal funds are sought and obtained to supplement basic services to the greatest extent possible. In recent years, two different life skills grants have been obtained to augment services intended to facilitate a successful transition to post release. The current life skills grant is titled "Prison to Work" and includes a variety of job preparation services such as career guidance and career exploration, portfolio development, and support with the job search upon release. A recent grant from a private foundation has allowed the Department to initiate relationships with several Maryland college and universities to offer advanced education to those inmates who qualify. One recent initiative under this foundation funding supports instruction in fiber optic cabling installation at the Anne Arundel Community College. Finally, the Department relies on funding support and a variety of in-kind support from the Department of Public Safety to provide a more extensive educational and library program offerings.

The Department of Education offers instruction and library services in all of the major Division of correction institutions and at the Patuxent Institution. Instruction is offered by State certified instructors or by employees of participating community colleges. Public Safety case management staff assign inmates to participate in the education program as an institutional work assignment. State law requires most inmates who have not earned a high school credential to participate. Unfortunately, waiting lists sometimes require that inmates in need of schooling await enrollment openings, sometimes for many months. A small number of inmates qualify for State and federally-mandated special education. These include inmates under the age of 21 who have an educationally significant handicapping condition and who have not completed high school.

Current initiatives in the education and library programs include participation in the pilot pre-release and transition project, development of post release employment placement services for students who have completed programs,

development of a joint initiative with State Use Industries to address idleness in Maryland prisons, development of a data management system for enrolled inmates to improve program management, accountability and feedback form post release employment, expansion of parenting education services, and enhanced utilization of various resources for distance learning to expand the range of program offerings at isolated correctional sites.

Minnesota Department of Corrections

The Minnesota Department of Corrections was created in 1959 to consolidate state correctional functions under one agency. A service and regulatory agency, the department has a broad scope of activities and responsibilities. The department currently operates ten correctional facilities including eight for adults and two for juveniles.

Adult prison populations total more than 6,300 inmates; juvenile offenders number around 225. More than 15,000 offenders on probation, supervised release and parole are supervised by department agents. Through the state Community Corrections Act, the department also administers subsidy funds to units of local government for corrections programs. The department has about 3,700 employees. The demographics of the inmate population as of January 1, 2001, are:

Average age: 33.3

Sex: 94.2% male, 5.8% female

Race: 47.5% white, 36.1% black, 7.2% Hispanic, 6.9% Indian, 2.3% other

The average sentence is 35.9 months, not including life sentences. The major offense distribution includes 19.1% for criminal sexual conduct, 16.1% for homicide, 17.2% for drug abuse, 12.4% for assault, 8.3% for burglary and 8.1% for robbery.

The commissioner of corrections heads the department and reports directly to the Governor. Below the commissioner are two deputy commissioners. There are three divisions within the department: adult facilities, management services and community and juvenile services. Additionally, units exist in the areas of investigations, interagency management, correctional industries, and health services. Citizen advisory groups play key roles in the department in areas such as community corrections, woman offender issues and correctional industries.

Adult inmates in state facilities have access to a variety of work, education and other program activities. Programs are also provided for sex offenders and chemically dependent inmates.

Correctional Education Programs

Correctional education programs in the Minnesota Department of Corrections are offered in all facilities.

Educational programs in adult and juvenile facilities focus on basic literacy instruction. The Department of Corrections has mandated that all eligible offenders earn a high school diploma or GED while incarcerated.

Vocational and higher education is also made available. Each facility employs an education director. Additionally, the central office education unit oversees all educational programming. Education services include instruction in Adult Basic Education, GED preparation and testing, high school diploma, life skills and cognitive skills, secondary and post-secondary vocational training, and post secondary academic courses. Classes in transition and pre-release are also offered. The Department of Corrections also offers special education and an apprenticeship program.

Instruction is provided by appropriately licensed teachers hired by the department and vocationally licensed teachers by contract.

Offender demographics highlight the need for correctional education.

34.5% of offenders do not have a GED or high school diploma.

The average reading level at intake is at the tenth grade level.

57.3% adult offenders convicted for a crime against a person

Average age is 33.3

20% are diagnosed with severe mental health issues.

94% will return to the community.

Adult Basic Education classes are offered in all facilities. These classes emphasize increasing offenders' literacy skills and help prepare students for the GED test. The Department of Corrections has mandated that all eligible offenders earn a GED or high school diploma during their incarceration.

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Special education is offered at three adult facilities (one close custody, one medium custody, and the women's facility) and one juvenile facility. Special education is governed by federal and state guidelines and monitored by the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning.

Vocational instruction is offered via contracts with Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU). The training is offered at six of the eight adult facilities. MnSCU provides licensed vocational teachers and programs. All vocational coursework and certificates earned are accredited through North Central Accreditation. Vocational programs offered include masonry, painting, carpentry, cabinet making, dry wall, floor covering, welding, printing, machining, upholstery, computer specialist, computer hardware support, baking, meat cutting, culinary arts, small business management, information processing, barbering, drafting, telecommunications technician, and facility maintenance.

Post secondary academic education is offered at five of the eight adult facilities. Accredited instruction is provided via MnSCU partnerships. College coursework is focused on having students achieve an Associate of Arts degree prior to release. Non-tax dollars, Youthful Offender grant monies and inmate generated phone commissions fund this program.

Pre-release classes prepare offenders for transition back into the community. Pre-release programming begins during the last six months of incarceration and is a blend of pre-release classes, self-help resource areas and staff-assisted services. Job searching and job interviewing are examples of topics covered in pre-release classes.

Transition fairs are offered at all medium custody facilities and the female institution. A new transition center has opened at one adult male facility.

The Minnesota Department of Corrections offers educational programs in the hope that, once released, offenders will be trained and educated to enter the workforce and live as productive, contributing citizens. At the end of the third quarter, FY 2001, 1,693 offenders were participating in Adult Basic Education, 831 offenders were participating in vocational education and 257 offenders were participating in academic higher education. Additionally, 1,528 vocational education credits and 107 academic higher education credits were earned by

offenders. There were also 266 offenders who completed life skills courses, 92 offenders participating in critical thinking courses and 297 offenders participating in pre-release courses.

In the past three years, Minnesota's correctional education programs have been awarded a number of grants from various sources, the largest of which has been five years of Life Skills/Learn to Earn Federal dollars.

Current initiatives in the education program include:

- **The addition of the Corrections Learning Network (CLN) satellite technology. Through this cooperative effort, education programs can be broadcast directly into offender cells or the classroom.**
- Piloting a Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) program in all facilities. The goal of this program is to provide children of offenders and juvenile offenders with books, and to provide a connecting activity with their incarcerated parent.
- Creation of a comprehensive education database for the education unit.
- Establishing a more comprehensive transition effort with other state agencies and designing an offender workforce development plan.

Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction

The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction is one of the State's largest agencies with over 15,000 employees, 31 prisons, and nearly 50,000 prisoners. The Department is the fifth largest correctional agency in the country. In addition, the Division of Parole and community Services provides parole and probation services throughout the 88 counties in Ohio.

The Director of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction reports directly to the Governor of Ohio Bob Taft. The Director has an Assistant Director and five Deputy directors in charge of prisons, parole and community services, business administration, management information systems, and human resources. Each of the thirty-one prisons is administered by a warden and various deputy wardens in charge of security and administrative functions of the institutional operation.

The Ohio prison system classifies the correctional institutions into four major categories based on the security level of the security classification of the inmates sent to the respective correctional facilities. Ohio has maximum, close, medium, and minimum security institutions.

The correctional institutions provide a variety of work and educational opportunities for inmates. The Ohio Penal Industries has a diverse number of industrial shops which provide not only the traditional license plate production for Ohio, but also make a wide variety of wood and metal furniture, printing, drafting, computer refurbishing, manufacturing of snow plows and salt spreaders for the Department of Transportation, soap and cleaning materials, asbestos removal crews, data processing, and clothing and shoe manufacture.

Ohio's prison system also operates a number of farms that help to offset the costs of providing vegetables and meat products to feed the large inmate population. The farms produce products such as corn, soybeans, wheat, potatoes, poultry, hog and beef production. In addition, a slaughterhouse and dairy processing are located at correctional institutions within the system.

The correctional institutions also provide job opportunities in the areas of food service, maintenance shops, clerical support, and janitorial services within the various departments of the prison and in the housing units.

Ohio Central School System

In addition to the job and occupational opportunities, the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction provides academic and vocational training programs through the Ohio Central School System. The Ohio Central School system was chartered in 1973 by the Ohio Department of Education. The OCSS has over 550 teachers, guidance counselors, administrators, and project directors to provide educational programs in all the adult prisons in the state of Ohio. The average daily enrollment for the Ohio Central School System in 1998 was over 13,000 inmates participating in all educational programs. Also, during 1998 the OCSS awarded over 6,000 certificates for academic and vocational achievement. The cumulative enrollment for the Ohio Central School system in 1998 was nearly 27,000 students. At any one time, 26% of the total inmate population of nearly 50,000 inmates were enrolled in an educational program.

Education programs are established in all of the adult prisons in the State of Ohio. The Ohio Central School System operates the educational programs through a regional system. A principal administers each of the thirteen regions.

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A principal may have two to three institutions and one or more community-based correctional facility within the region.

The institutional education programs consist of both academic and vocational programs. At a minimum, each institution offers Adult Basic Education, GED Preparation and a Literacy Unit. The Literacy Unit consists of a certified teacher and inmate tutors. The inmate tutors are trained in nationally recognized literacy methods. The inmate tutors then assist the teacher in the instruction of the inmate students.

The vocational programs vary in each institution. The Ohio Central School System has over 33 different areas of vocational programming in the school district. The Ohio Department of Education certifies each of the programs. In addition, the Ohio Central School System has developed, with the cooperation of the U.S. Bureau of Labor – Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training, forty-seven apprenticeship trades. Currently, over 700 inmates are enrolled in the trade and industrial programs throughout the Department.

The Ohio Central School System also provides Pre-Release Training for every eligible inmate prior to release from the institution. The program consists of a three-week intensive course designed to prepare inmates to return to the community. Job search, job interviewing, and job retention skills are a few of the topics covered in the Pre-Release curriculum. In addition, inmates will prepare a resume and a job portfolio to assist in their job search once they are released.

The educational program offerings in Ohio's prisons also include post-secondary education. The Ohio legislature, after a two-year study of post secondary education programs in prisons, determined to retain college and university programs in Ohio's prisons. The Ohio Central School System contracts with various colleges and universities to provide Advanced employment and Job Skills training in the correctional institutions.

The Ohio Central School System provides a variety of educational programs both in academic skill building and vocational training. The goal of the system is to provide the offender the opportunity to improve his or her academic and vocational skills to become a productive citizen upon release to the community.

