

Massachusetts Department of Youth Services





Jane Tewksbury, Commissioner
Edward Dolan, Deputy Commissioner



Vision

The Department of Youth Services is a leader in the field of juvenile justice that collaborates with youth, families, communities, government, provider agencies, and others to prevent juvenile crime.

We provide the most innovative and effective treatment and skill development services available to the youth committed to our care. The Department exemplifies diversity in the management of all our work and relationships. We effectively manage the resources necessary to achieve the Department's mission



DYS is the Commonwealth's Juvenile Correctional Agency

➤ Functions

- Detention
- Residential Treatment
- Parole/Community

Each Year:

18,000 to 20,000 arraignments


- 5,700 bail admissions
 - average length of stay is 17 days
- 1,200 commitments
 - average length of stay is 2.5 years

Census

- On any given day there are 2,000 committed youth in custody.
 - 49% in Residential Placements
 - 51% in Community Supervision

2001 Legislative Report

Key findings on educational services

- Teacher Recruitment and Retention
 - Transitions
 - Special Education
 - Learning Methods, Curriculum and Other Resources
 - Vocational Education and Job Training
 - Computers and Technology
 - Infrastructure
- 

2002 Legislative Report

- Recommendations for DYS:
 - Implement a multiple phase education reform effort
 - Develop capacity to support education reform across the agency
 - Implemented researched-based curriculum
 - Develop a system wide staffing plan
 - Implement a comprehensive assessment system
 - Develop an effective community placement and transition process

2003 Legislative Report

- Key areas of the educational system to be enhanced through the new contract:
 - Educational Oversight and Administration,
 - Compliance with Special Education laws and other regulations,
 - Assessment of student achievement,
 - Curriculum development and standardization,
 - Training and professional development,
 - Resource identification and acquisition, and
 - Improved student transition to local schools upon their discharge from residential placement.

2004 Legislative Report

- DOE shall collaborate with DYS to recommend:
 - A foundation budget for educational services within DYS
 - Submit budget recommendations that the board of education shall include in its fiscal year 2006 budget request

2005 Legislative Report

- The additional \$2,550,000 in FY06 targeted:
 - Funding to build critical infrastructure
 - Building a stable workforce of qualified teachers
 - Teacher recruitment and professional development

2006 Legislative Report

- The Education Initiative reflected a collective commitment to meet state and federal standards for educational programming by developing a better coordinated, appropriately resourced educational system.
- As part of a comprehensive and coordinated effort to improve educational services, the Department awarded a contract to the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute with the broad purpose of:
 - providing critical formative feedback regarding the initiative's implementation and efficacy to date, and
 - to help identify critical next steps in the reform process.

DYS Field Assessment: Initial Attempt at Evaluating Progress

- In January 2005, Minimum Education Requirements implemented in all residential programs
 - Facilities
 - Staff
 - Professional Development
 - Class Schedule
 - Curriculum Materials
 - Transcripts
 - Testing
 - Services for Special Needs Students
 - Technology

DYS Field Assessment: Initial Attempt at Evaluating Progress

- Field Assessment Tool is introduced to programs based on minimum education requirements
- Field Assessments for residential programs are completed annually for 2005 – 2007
- Data is collected through one-day field visits to all DYS facilities using a standardized self reporting tool, coordinated by Commonwealth Corp staff

MA DYS Seeks System-wide Evaluation to Guide Additional Education Improvements

- Minimum education requirements gave a minimal view systemically of the DYS Education Initiative.
- Talked to local universities about how to approach
- DYS made a commitment to allocate funding for evaluation for FY07/08
- DYS decided to contract for service and designed a Request for Proposal

Focusing the Evaluation To Enhance Education Service Delivery

- RFP was based on a logic model
- Logic model guided core education strategies and activities
- DYS wanted to go back to the original legislative reports and address those topics
- Evaluative process would encompass a systemic view of Education Initiative

University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute MA DYS Education Evaluation Plan

PHASE 1

- Initial Evaluation
- Literature Review
- Development a Comprehensive Evaluation Plan

PHASE 2

- Communication Protocols
- Implement Comprehensive Evaluation Plan
- Final Report

University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute
MA DYS Education Evaluation Plan

➤ Core research questions

- To what extent has DYS successfully implemented strategies designed to improve the educational and life outcomes for youth they serve? What factors have influenced the extent or success of implementation
- Have the Education Initiative's core strategies led to, or are they leading to anticipated short or mid term impacts? What other impacts or outcomes have resulted from the Education Initiative
- Based on key findings of the evaluation, what should DYS focus on over the coming years in order to realize the long term goals/outcomes of the Education Initiative?

University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute MA DYS Education Evaluation Plan

- Answers to research questions will be considered and evaluation will also strive to identify
 - Emerging promising practices
 - Causes and potential solutions for mixed finding and impacts
 - Causes and potential solutions for gaps in evidence, including additional data which need to be collected to properly measure certain outcomes outside the realm of the evaluation
 - Apparent gaps in the current Education Initiative
 - Key lessons learned through the implementation of the Initiative to date

Lessons Learned

➤ Money, time, experience

- More money would have allowed development of additional data and more in-depth research

➤ Barriers

- Data still inconsistent across the system; not always available in a useful format
- Data often incomplete or not up to date

Contact Info

➤ MA DYS

Christine Kenney, Director of Educational Services

Christine.Kenney@state.ma.us or 617.960.3324

➤ University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute

Lonnie Kaufman, Research Manager

lkaufman@donahue.umassp.edu or 413.587.2419

➤ Commonwealth Corporation

Janet Daisley, Senior Program Manager

jdaisley@commcorp.org or 413.582.9054 ext107