CHAPTER 7
CASE STUDIES AND DEMONSTRATION SITES

7.1 Introduction

The Juvenile Justice Education Enhancement Program (JJEEP) has been conducting case studies of residential programs for the past two years. In 2004, JJEEP visited three programs, two of which are high-performing and the third, average performing. This year (2005), from May to the end of September, JJEEP research staff conducted case studies of six residential programs throughout the state. Three of these programs are high performing, two appear to be among the lowest performing in the state, and one falls in between. To date, JJEEP has conducted case studies of five high performing, two average performing, and two low-performing residential programs, for a total of nine programs. Consequently, it is possible to compare the number of best practices across the three program types. Additionally, it became apparent that these exceptional programs could be used as demonstration sites, or best practice lab schools, so that less successful programs could visit them and observe how they are able to implement and operate with the best practices identified in the relevant literature (see Chapter 6 for a comprehensive review of the best practices literature).

The purpose of conducting these case studies is to identify juvenile justice education demonstration sites throughout the state of Florida. The process for their selection includes combing multiple years of Quality Assurance (QA) performance information and teacher quality data to identify consistently high performing educational programs with little provider, administrative, and teacher turnover. Once identified, these programs are subjected to further research, using the case study methods that identify the program processes that facilitate best practices used in each program. After the case studies are conducted, high-performing programs, based on their use of identifiable best practices, are asked to serve as demonstration sites. As demonstration sites, these high-performing programs will be able to share their practices with other lower-performing programs throughout the state.

This chapter is focused upon answering several research questions. First, by conducting case studies of five high-performing programs, the chapter answers the question: *to what degree do the programs as a whole exhibit and incorporate the best practices identified in the literature*? Basically, this question is concerned with comparing the best practices identified in Chapter 6 with those observed among the high-performing programs. A second research question is: *what are the specific differences in program practices and processes for high- versus average- and low-performing programs*? Based on the literature reviewed in Chapter 6, the present chapter tests the hypothesis that high-performing programs – as a whole – exhibit a greater number of best practices than do average and low-performing programs. The chapter is also aimed at answering the question: *what specific program processes appear to be related to best practices*?

Although many programs may be aware of effective educational strategies, they may not be able to implement or maintain such practices. Therefore, the chapter provides information to juvenile justice practitioners that should assist them in increasing their number of best practices by modeling their programs after more successful programs.

The chapter is divided into four subsequent sections. Section 7.2 outlines the purposes and responsibilities of juvenile justice education demonstration sites. Section 7.3 explains the methodology used for the case study selection, preparation, and visits. In addition, a description of each of the nine programs is provided. Section 7.4 provides the results of the case studies using the typology of best practices presented in Chapter 6. The final section, Section 7.5, concludes the chapter by summarizing the results of the case studies, discussing some of the limitations of the case study methodology, and presenting JJEEP's plans for future research regarding case studies and demonstration sites.

7.2 Demonstration Sites

For the past two years, JJEEP has been committed to identifying and establishing demonstration sites, or lab schools, that can serve as model programs. The case study project provided the information necessary to identify potential demonstration sites, while the scoring rubric process (explained in the Section 7.3) screened out those programs that exhibit an inadequate number of best practices and would consequently offer little benefit to visiting programs, juvenile justice educators, and policymakers. This section will first describe the purposes of the demonstration sites and then enumerate the responsibilities of these sites.

Purposes of Demonstration Sites

The purpose of establishing demonstration sites is to provide models of exemplary and replicable best practices in Florida's juvenile justice education system. These sites will be able to answer two critical questions regarding the delivery of educational services to incarcerated youths: *what policies, practices, and processes are most effective*? and *how can these policies, practices, and processes be implemented and maintained*? Specifically, demonstration sites are consistently high-performing programs that possess and utilize a variety of research-based inputs and activities in order to present an effective positive turning point–namely, academic and/or vocational success–in the students' delinquent life course. (For detailed descriptions of the demonstration site programs, refer to Appendix J or visit the JJEEP website at http://www.jjeep.org).

Roles and Responsibilities of Demonstration Sites

Demonstration sites have several responsibilities. These include: (a) maintaining high quality assurance (QA) scores, (b) providing technical assistance to programs in need via prescheduled visits and telephone calls, (c) allowing other programs and persons to visit at predetermined times for the purposes of program improvement or research,

(d) presenting at conferences (at minimum, the Juvenile Justice Education Institute and Southern Conference on Corrections [JJEI & SCC]), (e) agreeing to be featured in JJEEP's website and in JJEEP's Annual Report, and (f) having program representatives serve as peer reviewers in JJEEP's QA process. Thus, lower performing programs and other visitors will be able to access the demonstration sites via prearranged onsite visits, telephone calls, and the Internet.

While currently no programs have been officially deemed demonstration sites, JJEEP expects to formally establish five high-performing programs as such during 2006, as well as identify other potential demonstration sites. In future years, JJEEP would like for the demonstration sites to represent the various regions of Florida, male and female populations, differing security levels, population age, and program types, and other distinguishing program characteristics. (See the following section for descriptions of these issues for each of the selected programs.) The demonstration sites will provide JJEEP with empirical evidence regarding the implementation and maintenance of best practices, as well as innovative approaches to best practices. Ultimately, these demonstration sites will inform JJEEP's QA process by suggesting possible revisions to the QA standards and scoring procedures.

7.3 Case Study Methodology

As previously mentioned, the results discussed in this chapter are based on two years of case study research. Although the case study project was originally intended to focus primarily on high-performing programs, an additional objective of examining average- and low-performing programs was added in order to provide comparison cases for the high-performing programs. Ultimately, JJEEP researchers visited five high-performing programs, two average-performing programs, and two low-performing programs. This section describes the methods used to select and study each of these programs and provides a general description of each of the programs in the sample.

Selection of Case Study Programs

The methodology employed to select the high- and low-performing residential programs was quite similar. The first step was to examine trends in QA scores over the past five years to provide a pool of potential candidates that either: (a) consistently scored significantly higher than average or (b) consistently scored significantly lower than average. Programs that had not been in operation for at least three years were excluded. Program characteristics, such as gender of the population, geographical location, security level, and maximum capacity, were also considered, with the intent that the selected programs would provide a representative sample of residential programs in Florida; however, these factors were not given priority, as the main objective was to select the absolute best residential programs, along with the most troubled residential programs.

Second, all of the programs' available QA reviews, self-report documents, and educational staff information were reviewed to provide an idea of what the program does,

how well they operate, and the history of their problems requiring either technical assistance (TA) or corrective action plans (CAPs). Third, JJEEP research staff interviewed the QA reviewers who had most recently visited the programs regarding each potential candidate's suitability as either a high-performing case study or a low-performing comparison program in Florida. The final stage in the selection process involved several conferences with JJEEP researchers and QA reviewers in which the results of the prior phases were presented and discussed, and final decisions were made. Due to resource limitations and the ultimate goal of identifying and establishing demonstration sites, it was decided that the four seemingly highest performing programs and the two programs that were historically in need of the most TA would be included in the 2005 sample.

The Case Study Process

Following the selection process, the case study process involved three stages: (1) a pre-visit component, (2) an on-site component, and (3) a post-visit component.

Pre-Visit Component

While the selection process represents most of the pre-visit component, two additional steps were performed prior to the on-site visit. First, using the available information, a pre-visit case study report was compiled that enumerated and described each program's best practices as reflected in QA reports, self-report documents, educational staff information, and QA reviewer interviews. Based on the literature reviewed in Chapter 6, this information was organized into six general categories, or areas, of best practices: (1) school environment; (2) resources and community partnerships; (3) assessments, diagnostics, and guidance; (4) exit and aftercare services; (5) curriculum and instruction; and (6) educational personnel and teachers. Second, JJEEP contacted the programs' lead educators and program administrators to determine a suitable time to visit and to discuss what the visit would involve.

On-Site Component

The on-site visit included four components: (1) a facility tour, (2) observations, (3) interviews, and (4) surveys. The facility tour generally occurred at the beginning of the case study, while the observations continued throughout the study. Various aspects of the programs were observed, including facility design; use of educational resources; general behavior; interaction among and between students, teachers, program staff, and administrators; class size; and instructional strategies.

Interviews, each lasting approximately 30 minutes, were conducted with the lead educator, the facility director, all teachers, the treatment coordinator, and the guidance/transition specialist. (Copies of the interviewing instruments can be found in Appendix G.) The interviews covered such topics as program goals and philosophies, the transition process, methods of individualizing instruction, strategies for accelerating student learning and student progression, reward/award tactics, methods for engaging

parental involvement, teacher recruitment and retention practices, the integration of custody and care services with educational services, interaction among education, custody, and care staff. At the time of the on-site visit, the JJEEP researchers were aware of many facets of the programs; therefore, the interviewing component was useful in identifying the *processes* through which the program's polices and practices were implemented and maintained.

Lastly, students and teachers (including the lead educator) were administered a climate survey, which took approximately 30 minutes to complete. (Copies of the survey instruments can be found in Appendix G). While these surveys were primarily concerned with issues related to school environment (e.g., behavior management, student-student and student-teacher interaction, communication among educational, custody, and treatment staff, etc.), several other areas of best practices were also explored. These included perceptions of the behavior management system, student access to educational resources, instructional strategies, transition planning, and parental involvement.

Post-Visit Component

Following the on-site visit, three post-visit analyses were conducted. First, the student and teacher surveys were analyzed using basic statistical procedures (i.e., mean comparisons and percentage distributions). Second, a post-visit case study report was compiled and organized according to the six areas of best practices. Finally, the pre-visit reports were compared to the observations and the interview and survey results. When significant disparities were noted, the post-visit report was sent to the lead educator for input and editing. The lead educator was asked to make any appropriate suggestions and corrections, and these were incorporated into the final post-visit write-up. These write-ups served as the primary guide for the comparison of the high-, average-, and low-performing programs.

The Sample

This subsection provides brief descriptions of the nine case study programs: the *Washington County School Program at Dozier*, *Pinellas Sheriff's Boot Camp*, *Avon Park Youth Academy*, *Stewart Marchman Oaks Halfway House*, *Pensacola Boys Base*, *Eckerd Intensive Halfway House*, *Vernon Place*, *Tiger Success Center*, and *JoAnn Bridges Academy*. The programs are rank-ordered such that the first five programs comprise the demonstration site candidates (the high-performing programs), while *Eckerd Intensive Halfway House* and *Vernon Place* represent the average-performing programs, and the last two programs (*Tiger Success Center*, and *JoAnn Bridges Academy*) represent the low-performing programs.

High-Performing Programs

Washington County School Program at Dozier

Dozier is a high-risk intensive residential program located in Jackson County a largely rural county in Florida's panhandle. The Facility serves 190 male sex offenders and repeat offenders, ranges in age from 13 to 21 who are committed for an average of 350 days. As such, Dozier is often considered a last stop for juvenile offenders in Florida. The youths at Dozier come from all over the state, with only about a dozen originating from the Panhandle. The Washington County School District operates the educational program at Dozier, and the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice operates the facility. Although Dozier was one of the three programs involved in the landmark *Bobby M.* class action lawsuit of more than two decades ago, it now serves as a model program, especially in the areas of resources and community partnerships, vocational curriculum, reading curriculum, teachers and educational staff, and school environment. In particular, Dozier's educational staff is both well qualified and very experienced with teaching in juvenile justice institutions. Moreover, there has been very little turnover at the administrative level; in fact, the principal has been with the program for almost 20 years, the assistant principal has been at Dozier for almost 10 years, and most of the academic and vocational teachers have also been there for a considerable amount of time.

Pinellas Sheriff's Boot Camp

Pinellas Boot Camp is a moderate-risk facility that houses 60 male offenders, most of whom are repeat offenders. Students range in age from 14 to 18 years and spend an average of 240 days in the program. The Pinellas County School District operates the educational program, and the Pinellas County Sheriff's Department operates the facility. First established in 1993, as a cooperative venture between the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office and the local community, Pinellas Boot Camp is comprised of two platoons: the Boot Camp Platoon and the Transition Platoon. After spending four months in the former, which emphasizes discipline and paramilitary training, students graduate to the Transition Platoon, which prepares them for life back in their communities by focusing on self-determination skills and allowing students to attend local public schools during the day. Although boot camps traditionally emphasize physical training, all program and educational staff at Pinellas Boot Camp agree that education is their first priority. As with Dozier, the members of the educational staff are well qualified and experienced, thus attrition is not a problem for Pinellas Boot Camp. In addition, Pinellas Boot Camp excels in the areas of communal organization, student bonding, exit and aftercare services, and language arts curriculum.

Avon Park Youth Academy

Avon Park is a moderate-risk residential program in Polk County that houses up to 200 males, ranging in age from 16 to 18 years, who are committed for an average of 270 days. Students come from all over the state and are generally regarded as being unlikely to return home or to public school following release. Most are diagnosed as not having any

significant mental health or substance abuse problems. Because of the relatively older age of the population, Avon Park focuses on life skills training and vocational education; however, the program also has extensive community partnerships and aftercare services. Avon Park originally began as a collaborative effort between the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice and Securicor, the for-profit organization that currently operates both the facility and the educational program. The program based on a philosophy similar to the 1800's delinquency work programs wherein residents spend the majority of their weekdays in vocational training. While Avon Park lacks a strong emphasis on academic training, it excels in vocational education. The Home Builders Institute provides six of the 12 vocational instructors, who teach a variety of courses offering actual work experience, community-based instruction, pre-release involvement with employers, and employment opportunities following release. Moreover, to combat the problem of teacher recruitment in this rural, isolated location, Avon Park offers an incentive plan for existing employees that include pay raises with each additional level of training. Partly because of this recruitment and retention policy–and partly due to the clear and consistent mission of Avon Park–there has been very little turnover among administrators and teachers and no turnover at the provider level.

Stewart Marchman Oaks Halfway House

Oaks Halfway House is a moderate-risk facility serving a male population of 40 students, whose ages range from 13 to 18 years. Located in Volusia County, most students are local, and many of them are classified as in need of exceptional student educational (ESE) services; consequently, student-to-teacher ratios do not exceed 10:1. Stewart Marchman Programs (a non-profit organization) operates the facility, while the Volusia County School District operates the educational program. Oaks Halfway House shares its grounds and instructional personnel with its all-female counterpart: Stewart Marchman Pines, which also serves as a day treatment program. At Oaks Halfway House, education is viewed as the number one priority by education, custody, and care staff alike. The dominant mode of instruction is through the use of computers. Specifically, the Volusia County School District has designed a unique software program–COMPASS–in which various software programs are integrated to allow students to earn the maximum number of credits possible in the shortest time span. The well qualified academic teachers, who are able to teach in their area of certification (with the aid of an ESE teacher) due to the recently adopted rotating schedule, supplement the computer-assisted instruction (CAI) with a variety of offline activities. Moreover, community service activities and technology resources are abundant, local students are eligible for aftercare services offered by Eckerd Reentry, and the shared goals between educational and facility staff members have created a stable and pleasant working environment that has served to attenuate attrition problems for both teachers and administrators.

Pensacola Boys Base

Pensacola Boys Base is a moderate-risk residential program located in Escambia County on Corry Station, a United States Naval Base. Established in 1972, Pensacola Boys Base became the first United States juvenile justice program to be housed on a military base,

thus providing its residents with such benefits as access to the base's cafeteria, gymnasium and athletic fields, as well as the opportunity to participate in and graduate from United States Navy training programs. The program serves 28 males, ranging in age from 16 to 18 years, for an average of six to nine months. Most of the students are local–either from Escambia County or its neighboring counties. Although situated on the base, the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice operates the facility while the Escambia County School District operates the educational program. Pensacola Boys Base is primarily focused on community reintegration, which is largely accomplished by assigning to each student individual mentors from the naval base or the community. The program is also active in community events, offers its students and teachers an abundant supply of learning resources and technology, provides employment opportunities and family counseling for local students following release, has developed a rigorous reading curriculum, and has well-qualified and experienced teachers. Once again, attrition has not proven itself to be an issue at either the provider, administrator, or teacher level, which has fostered a stable, open, and honest school environment.

Average-Performing Programs

Eckerd Intensive Halfway House

Eckerd Intensive Halfway House (IHH) is a moderate-risk facility housing 30 males, ranging in age from 13 to 18 years. Although located in the county of Okeechobee, the program is supervised by Pinellas County. Since its inception in 1994, Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc., (a non-profit organization) has operated both the facility and the educational program. Prior to the establishment of Eckerd IHH, the facility buildings were part of the Okeechobee School for Boys, one of Florida's juvenile training schools. Eckerd essentially serves as a therapeutic community that emphasizes family and mutual respect. For instance, family days are a regular occurrence, and transportation is provided for parents if needed. In addition, the teachers are generally well qualified and student-to-teacher ratios do not exceed 10:1. Moreover, the Eckerd IHH conditional release program–much like Avon Park's aftercare program–allows local students to return to their homes prior to release to establish concrete goals and arrangements. Similar to the demonstration site candidates, the Eckerd IHH educational staff has experienced very little turnover and has expressed satisfaction with their working environment. However, community partnerships and involvement are lacking, as are learning resources, individualized curricula, and a strong focus on language arts and reading.

Vernon Place

Vernon Place is a high-risk group treatment home serving 40 females, aged 12 to 19 years, for an average of 300 days. Located in Washington County, the operator of the educational program is the Washington County School District, while Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc., (a non-profit organization) operates the facility. Disadvantaged by both its isolated location and its security level, Vernon Place is able to offer its students only limited community involvement activities; however, other aspects of the program

are more positive. For example, like Eckerd IHH, the program emphasizes mutual respect and facilitates parental involvement by offering transportation and accepting collect calls from parents. In addition, the teachers are well qualified and generally have extensive teaching experience. Moreover, the lead educator and teachers have been at Vernon Place for several years, thus attrition among the educational staff is not a major issue, and communication and cooperation among the educational staff are open and honest. Eckerd Reentry also provides aftercare services for eligible students (although most students attending Vernon Place are not local and, therefore, not considered eligible). On the other hand, Vernon Place has made limited attempts to secure additional funding; as a consequence, academic and vocational learning materials are inadequate.

Low-Performing Programs

Tiger Success Center

Tiger Success is a high-risk serious habitual offender program (SHOP) located in Duval County. It serves 20 males, aged 13 to 19 years, for an average of 270 days. Correctional Services of Florida, Inc., operates the facility, while the Duval County School Board recently assumed control over the educational program. While teacher attrition has always been somewhat of an issue (out of eight previous teachers, two have stayed longer than one year), there have also been significant administrative and provider changes since 2000. There have been three education providers, three facility operators, four lead educators (plus one vacancy), and three program administrators. Currently, the lead educator serves as the sole teacher (and guidance/transition coordinator), with a class of 20 students. Communication and cooperation between educational and program staff and between the program and the school district are severely strained, and the repercussions of those strained relationships are reflected in Tiger Success's policies and practices, as well as in the overall school environment. Although the teacher employs a variety of instructional strategies and incorporates life skills training into regular lesson plans, deficiencies in the critical areas of resources, technology, community and business partnerships, vocational opportunities, reading and language arts curriculum, exit and aftercare services, and teacher recruitment and retention policies substantially restrict the educational opportunities afforded the students.

JoAnn Bridges Academy

JoAnn Bridges is a moderate-risk halfway house located in Madison County that serves 30 females. The students range in age from 13 to 18 years and tend to spend an average of 12 months in the program, although JoAnn Bridges' contract with Department of Juvenile Justice stipulates a maximum of six months. Most of the students are not local, but they generally come from the North Florida and Panhandle regions. Correctional Services Corporation (a for-profit organization) operates both the educational program and the facility, and there has been a series of staff turnovers similar to that at Tiger Success. In particular, although Correctional Services Corporation has been at JoAnn Bridges since the year after the program first opened in 1998 (at which time it had originally been intended to be an annex to the nearby all-male Greenville Hills

Academy), there has been very little stability among the lead educator, program administrator, and teachers; there have been five lead educators, at least four program administrator turnovers, and a series of teacher turnovers. Consequently, the current teachers have had very little experience at JoAnn Bridges specifically, and not much more experience in any other educational settings. In fact, the lead educator has no classroom teaching experience. Moreover, the teachers are generally not well qualified, and there is limited communication at the program or school district level. The program does not have a reading curriculum, ESE services, or vocational options for the youths. Resources and technology are inadequate, and there is no community involvement dedicated to the school. In addition, the constant teacher and staff attrition at the program has prevented students from benefiting from the required 250-day school year.

The Scoring Process

As previously mentioned, the on-site component of the case study process led to the belief that some of the visited programs were neither particularly high- nor particularly low performing. This possibility provoked the need for a standard scoring procedure for uniformly determining high- or low-performing program status. The basis for this scoring rubric is the literature reviewed in Chapter 6. Specifically, each area of best practices was divided into components, and each component was then sub-divided into observable and measurable indicators. Indicators could receive one of three possible scores: 0, meaning that the indicator was either absent or present to such a limited degree that it had no overall impact; 1, meaning that the indicator was present to a sufficient degree; and 2, meaning that the indicator was present to an outstanding degree. (A copy of the scoring rubric is provided in Appendix I.)

Based on the distribution of scores, the following criteria were used to distinguish between high-, low-, and average-performing programs. High-performing programs are those that meet two criteria: (1) more than 80% of the indicators are observable and common practice and (2) in at least one area of best practices, all indicators are observable and common practice. Low-performing programs have no area of best practices with all indicators scored as being observable and common practice, and less than 50% of all indicators are observable and in practice. Average programs fall between these two extremes with regard to percentages (50-80%), but as with the low performing programs, they do not have an area of best practices wherein all indicators are observable and common practices. Once placed within one of the three categories, programs were ranked according to their indicator score, which took into account scores of 2 (i.e., differences in quality as well as quantity). Table 7.3 provides the results of the scoring process.

Table 7.3: Description of Program Scores

Program	Indicator Score	# 0 Scores	# 2 Scores	# Components with all Indicators 1 or 2	# Best Practice Areas with all Indicators 1 or 2	% Indicators 1 or 2
High-Performing						
Dozier	79	6	26	18	3	90
Pinellas	75	3	19	19	3	95
Avon Park	69	3	13	20	5	95
Oaks	68	4	13	18	3	95
Pensacola	53	8	12	15	1	86
Mean Score	**69**	**5**	**17**	**18**	**3**	**92**
Average-Performing						
Eckerd	48	19	8	11	0	68
Vernon	46	16	3	12	0	73
Mean Score	**47**	**18**	**6**	**12**	**0**	**71**
Low-Performing						
Tiger	19	40	0	4	0	32
JoAnn	10	48	0	1	0	17
Mean Score	**15**	**44**	**0**	**3**	**0**	**25**

The programs in Table 7.3 are listed in descending order based on their indicator scores. As Table 7.3 illustrates, high-performing programs generally exhibit a substantially greater number of scores of 2 than do the average and low-performing programs, while the low-performing programs received a considerably greater number of scores of 0 than did the average and high-performing programs. Moreover, high-performing programs have a substantially greater number of best practice area components with perfect (i.e., 1 or 2) scores than do the average and low-performing programs. And, by definition, the

high-performing programs are the only ones with any areas of best practices exhibiting perfect indicator scores. This typology is employed in the following section, wherein the three program types are compared on the basis of the six best practice areas.

7.4 Case Study Results

In this section, the comparison between the high-performing demonstration sites and the average- and low-performing programs will be presented. Specifically, these programs are compared according to the six areas of best practices identified in Chapter 6: (1) school environment; (2) resources and community partnerships; (3) assessments, diagnostics, and guidance; (4) exit and aftercare services; (5) curriculum and instruction; and (6) educational personnel and teachers.

School Environment

Of all the best practice areas, school environment has proven to be the anomaly. In particular, as illustrated in Table 7.4-1 below, although the high-performing and average programs both scored considerably higher than the low-performing programs, the average programs exhibited a slightly higher overall score than did the high-performing programs.

Table 7.4-1: School Environment Scores by Program Type*

COMPONENTS	Program Type *(N)*		
	High *(5)*	Average *(2)*	Low *(2)*
Communal Organization	1.2	0.8	0.2
Student Bonding	1.1	1.0	0.6
Inclusive Environment	1.0	1.0	0.5
Appropriate Class Size	1.2	1.0	0.0
Student and Parent Policy	0.9	1.75	0.0
OVERALL	**1.08**	**1.11**	**0.26**

* The numbers in this table and the remaining tables in this chapter represent the raw indicator scores (range 0-2) averaged for each of the three program types.

As can be seen in the Student and Parent Policy row, however, the high overall score for the average programs can be explained by their relatively better performance in this indicator. Specifically, Eckerd IHH and Vernon Place not only solicit parent and student participation to a greater extent than the other programs, but also make more accommodations to facilitate parent involvement. While most programs received a score of 1 because they offer conference calls for individual educational plan (IEP) and transition planning meetings when the parent is unable to attend, Eckerd IHH earned a 2 because it provides transportation for parents to the program, and Vernon Place received a 2 because it assists with transporting parents to and from the facility and accepts collect calls from parents.

For the remainder of the School Environment components, the high-performing programs generally scored higher than the average programs, while the average programs consistently scored higher than the low-performing programs. Within the Communal Organization component, all programs received at least a 1 in the Teacher Satisfaction indicator, and two received scores of 2. At Pinellas Boot Camp, one of the programs that scored a 2 in this indicator, one academic teacher reported, "[This] DJJ [Department of Juvenile Justice] school is a pleasant, rewarding site in which to work. We are successful because across the board there are high expectations, encouragement and support, and consistency and routine." However, several programs received a 0 for "Education is Number One" due to their greater emphasis on treatment over academics. On the other hand, some programs received scores of 2 in this indicator. Another academic instructor at Pinellas Boot Camp, for example, explained, "Excellent support is provided by the Juvenile Justice staff to the educational department. We have an environment where 'education is #1' and all students know they will succeed if they work hard. They all work hard and show improvement." While the low-performing programs typically received scores of 0 in the remaining Communal Organization indicators, the high-performing and average programs exhibited more of the best practices found in the literature and to a greater extent than did the low-performing programs. For example, Pinellas Boot Camp received several scores of 2 because their education, custody, and care staff all demonstrate that education is their first priority; communication between the three departments (i.e., education, custody, and treatment) is open, honest and meaningful; the teachers all agree that their administrators are effective leaders who treat them with respect and provide them with the materials necessary to be effective in the classroom.

The programs differed only slightly with regard to the remaining components (i.e., Student Bonding, Inclusive Environment, and Appropriate Class Size). Across most programs, the students generally reported low-performing relationships with teachers and unfair behavior management practices, but stated that the programs tend to foster positive perceptions of their peers. For example, a student at one of the lower performing programs said that, if given the chance, the one thing she would like to change about the program would be "the rules and nasty attitude they [staff/teachers] have." Other students reported that the teachers "treat me like a criminal," "try to set me up to get in trouble," etc. On the other hand, students at the high-performing programs frequently explained that their attachment to school had returned or strengthened during their stay. An Oaks Halfway House student, for instance, wrote, "This school has actually made me want to learn and to go back to get my GED and possibly go to college, thanks to all the teachers," while a student at Pensacola Boys Base reported that he had "increased his vocabulary and [that] this school has [given] me hope of graduating from college." A Pinellas Boot Camp student explained, "I have come so far in education. I give credit to the teachers, but for the most part, [it] is because I have begun to care about my education once more and I feel that is the key to my success here." Additionally, the high-performing programs generally offered more opportunities for success and incentives for academic achievement than did the other programs, while the average programs'

emphasis on group treatment appears to be more effective in promoting positive perceptions of peers.

Most programs have inclusive environments, although JoAnn Bridges received a 0 for this component because it segregates the high school ESE students from their same-age peers and places them with the middle school ESE and general education students. Similarly, most programs earned a score of 1 for the Appropriate Class Size component. Dozier, however, received a 2 because the remedial reading class has a reduced student-teacher ratio, and Tiger Success Center received a 0 because there is only one classroom, 20 students, and one teacher (and no teacher aide). The students themselves often expressed dissatisfaction with the classroom organizational structure at the lower-performing programs; for example, the comment, "6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 graders are all in one class [and] that's bad" suggests that the class size and/or organizational structure at this particular program may not be reflective of student needs or subject area demands.

Resources and Community Partnerships

Table 7.4-2 presents the results for resources and community partnerships. As expected, high-performing programs scored higher than average-performing programs, and both high and average programs scored higher than low-performing programs.

Table 7.4-2: Resources and Community Partnership Scores by Program Type

COMPONENTS	Program Type *(N)*		
	High *(5)*	**Average *(2)***	**Low *(2)***
Adequate Learning Materials	1.4	0.5	0.13
Community/Business Involvement	1.2	0.1	0.0
Collaborative Relationships with Relevant Agencies	1.4	1.0	0.0
OVERALL	**1.33**	**0.53**	**0.04**

High-performing programs have an overall higher score for Adequate Learning Materials because all programs of this type scored at least a 1 for each indicator, while three high-performing programs received multiple scores of 2. Dozier and Pensacola Boys Base, for example, demonstrated superiority because they have libraries containing several thousand up-to-date and age-appropriate books, periodicals, educational videos, computers, and reference materials. Several teachers at Dozier also have libraries within their classrooms. Also, Dozier and Oaks Halfway House have computers for every student, with an extensive amount of academic software programs, and teachers and administrators at those programs have access to an on-site electronic student information network.

Similarly, the high-performing programs scored higher than the average and low-performing programs for Community/Business Involvement and Collaborative Relationships with Relevant Agencies, and average programs had a higher score than low-performing programs for these two components. For instance, Avon Park and Pensacola Boys Base received scores of 2 for most of the indicators for these components. Specifically, students at Pensacola Boys Base have extensive opportunities to volunteer in their community for projects such as Habitat for Humanity and Relay for Life. Avon Park received a score of 2 for all indicators within the Community/Business Involvement component because its vocational curriculum allows students to receive actual work experience through volunteer work with local businesses and maintenance of the facility grounds. Moreover, some students are given the opportunity to work off site with a local business, and all students are provided employment after their release. One caveat worth mentioning is that Dozier, Vernon Place, and Tiger Success are high-risk facilities that do not allow their students to leave the facility, which severely limits their community involvement and outside work experience. Their lower scores are thus more the result of the facilities' risk level than their lack of effort.

Assessments, Diagnostics, and Guidance

Table 7.4-3 shows that high and average programs essentially scored the same in this area of best practices, whereas low-performing performing programs scored substantially lower. This dichotomy can largely be explained by the fact that low-performing programs demonstrated deficiencies in their assessment processes and in individualizing student plans.

Table 7.4-3: Assessments, Diagnostics, and Guidance Scores by Program Type

COMPONENTS	Program Type *(N)*		
	High *(5)*	**Average *(2)***	**Low *(2)***
Rigorous Assessment Process	1.1	1.0	0.1
Individualized Student Plans	1.6	1.5	0.5
Continual Monitoring of Student Progress	1.2	0.9	0.4
OVERALL	**1.3**	**1.13**	**0.33**

In particular, as Table 7.4.3 illustrates, the low-performing programs failed to use a variety of professionals for assessments (e.g., educational staff, ESE specialist, psychologist) or a multi-method assessment approach (e.g., curriculum-based, informal, norm-referenced), and did they did not assess incoming students in a variety of areas (e.g., academic, vocational, social). Additionally, the high and average programs use the results of these entry assessments to develop individual academic plans (IAPs) and IEPs, while there was much less evidence of this practice within the low-performing programs. For example, a student at one of the low-performing programs explained, "I do not learn. They have not called my school yet so I can start school [here]. I would like to get help on read[ing]. I would like to learn to read. Please help." In contrast, a student at Dozier

wrote, "It helps me with all types of things I didn't know," suggesting that Dozier's educational staff used the results of his entry assessments to design a curriculum that would address his specific needs, while the low-performing performing program had not even created an IAP or IEP for this particular student.

On the other hand, there is much less of a difference between the high and average programs' scores in regard to these two components. Most programs scored a 1 for both Rigorous Assessment Process and Individualized Student Plans; however, Dozier earned a 2 for both components because it has a diagnostic specialist in charge of pre- and post-testing, as well as a designated testing center. Students are placed in classrooms according to their assessment results, and some teachers use additional assessments that they develop on their own.

Most high- and average-performing programs give students progress reports every nine weeks as a means of providing them with feedback. Teachers at Pinellas Boot Camp also keep students informed of their progress by grading tests and assignments quickly and including comments on everything they return. Additionally, Oaks IHH has computer software that allows students to progress through lessons at their own pace, and student progress is posted daily on the computer. Teachers can also monitor student progress through the computer network, so that students can get prompt feedback from a variety of sources. Furthermore, if a student at Dozier earns credits at a quicker pace than others within his assigned classroom, he has the opportunity to progress to the next level rather than having his initial academic plan hinder his credit recovery. An Oaks Halfway House student, for example, explained his progress thus: "I just wanted to let you know how much the teachers helped me. I came in here in the 8th grade [failing], and brought my grades up and went to the 9th [grade]." Similarly, a Pinellas Boot Camp student wrote that, "I went from a 6th grade reading level to an 11th [grade reading level] in just 6 months." In contrast, a student at a low-performing program said, "We're basically reading from a text book, putting whatever answer down, and passing. No learning anything and besides that, we're retaking courses we already have credit for."

Exit and Aftercare Services

The sampled programs generally appear to be the weakest in providing exit and aftercare services. As demonstrated in Table 7.4-4, no program type received an overall score greater than 1. Nevertheless, high programs still received the highest scores, while average programs scored higher than the low-performing programs.

Table 7.4-4: Exit and Aftercare Services Scores by Program Type

COMPONENTS	Program Type (N)		
	High *(5)*	Average *(2)*	Low *(2)*
Exit Plan Designed and Initiated Upon Student Entry	1.25	1.0	0.5
Assistance with Transition Back to the Community	1.0	0.5	0.0
Community-Based Aftercare Program	0.7	0.3	0.0
OVERALL	**0.98**	**0.58**	**0.17**

As seen in Table 7.4-4, most programs experienced little difficulty in designing and initiating student exit plans upon student entry. However, Dozier and Pinellas Boot Camp were unique in that their students' exit portfolios require more than the basic assessment scores, grades, certificates, and diplomas. Dozier, for example, includes additional information on community colleges, applications, facility contact information, and other items that might be of assistance when students return to their communities. Pinellas Boot Camp, moreover, requires students to write essays pertaining to their personal transformation throughout the duration of their stay at the program, which includes an autobiographical account of their experience, a letter home, a victim letter of apology, and future goals.

Pinellas Boot Camp and Avon Park were the only programs to achieve a score of 2 in any of the remaining indicators. In particular, Avon Park excels at providing assistance with transition back to the community, and both programs have exceptional community-based aftercare programs. For example, prior to their exit, students at Avon Park are allowed a three-day transitional home visit, during which time they establish goals and make concrete plans regarding, at minimum, employment. Once they return to the facility, students take part in a two-week exit conference, during which they announce their final plans for after they leave. The students then meet with the aftercare counselor who will be assigned to them for a period of 12 months following release. These counselors meet with the students and their parents regularly, provide financial support for vocational or educational materials and any household items, assist the student with transportation, and meet with students individually or in groups for lunch and other fun activities. Alternatively, Pinellas Boot Camp offers a conditional release program that gives students the opportunity to attend the alternative high school across the street while living at the program. With this practice in place, transition becomes a more gradual process, allowing students to more easily adjust to a community environment while retaining the skills and sense of responsibility they have learned and developed at the program.

Curriculum and Instruction

In this area of best practices, the high programs exhibited noticeably higher scores than the average and low-performing programs. As Table 7.4-5 illustrates, with the exception of the Holistic Curriculum component, the high programs scored almost twice as high as the average and low-performing programs.

Table 7.4-5: Curriculum and Instruction Scores by Program Type

COMPONENTS	Program Type *(N)*		
	High *(5)*	Average *(2)*	Low *(2)*
Individualized Curriculum	1.3	0.3	0.3
Holistic Curriculum	0.8	1.0	1.0
Emphasis on Reading, Writing, and Speech	1.5	0.3	0.0
Various Instructional Strategies	1.5	0.8	0.3
OVERALL	**1.28**	**0.58**	**0.4**

Table 7.4-5 demonstrates that the high-performing programs exhibited individualized curricula to a much greater extent than the average and low-performing programs. Dozier, for example, conducts a series of entry assessments for all students to determine class placement, and some of the classroom teachers conduct their own additional assessments to get an even more precise idea of the students' ability levels and interests. Similarly, Oaks Halfway House has computer software that tailors students' lessons to their academic needs. In addition, all of the high-performing programs provide meaning-based feedback, and all but one of them provide credit recovery programs. For instance, the teachers at Pinellas Boot Camp individualize the curricula of slower learners by adding in study guides and other additional lessons, whereas the more advanced students receive more complex assignments and fewer additional tasks. A Pinellas Boot Camp student, for example, explained, "I like the way you can go at your own pace because in Math, I would still be doing Algebra IA instead of what I am doing now: Algebra IB." Conversely, a student at a low-performing performing program wrote, "I feel I'm going to be behind in my work. I'm going to get out and be under grade level. I feel this school is holding me back," while a student at an average program would prefer that "if a person is old enough, they can work on [their] GED. They don't have to wait until they get on transition."

As opposed to the other components in this area of best practices, the high-performing programs scored lower than the average and low-performing programs in the Holistic Curriculum component, which can be explained by their general lack of rigorous life skills and problem solving skills training in regular classroom lesson plans. Tiger Success Center, for example, received a 1 for this indicator because the teacher encourages group and partner work so that his students can learn social and anger management skills; he also selects topics from the daily newspaper (e.g., taxes, government) to integrate throughout the daily lesson plan. Were it not for this deficiency

among many of the high-performing programs, the strength of most of their vocational programs (reflected in the Well-Rounded indicator) would have created a different picture. Specifically, Dozier and Avon Park offer a wide range of vocational options, as well as extensive hands-on training. Avon Park, for example, allows its students to choose among the following vocations: digital publishing, horticulture, automotive service, culinary arts, flooring installation, computer-assisted design (CAD), carpentry, plumbing, electrical, landscaping, masonry, and building construction technology. Dozier, on the other hand, offers fewer selections (i.e., building construction, horticulture and agriculture sales and service, masonry, auto mechanics, and FETCH, a dog training vocational work experience program), but its vocational instructors require students to demonstrate mastery of shop safety and the fundamentals of their chosen occupation before beginning actual hands-on training.

The high-performing programs also appeared to have a much stronger emphasis on reading, writing, and speech than the average and low-performing programs. An Avon Park academic teacher, for instance, explained, "I enjoy using the tests of instructors to enhance the education of our students. I create [activities] for the instructor to use…Not only does this type of activity connect 'education' with the trade being learned – it also is an outstanding tool for developing critical thinking skills and comprehension. So, as students learn new vocabulary associated with their trade, they are able to grasp the idea that learning *can* be fun." Alternatively, Pinellas Boot Camp requires each student to develop and maintain a personal portfolio, which consists of introspective narratives detailing what he has learned throughout his experience in the program. This portfolio includes not only life skills training, but also forces the student to meticulously document his progress in each core academic subject and formally present the completed version to the graduation assembly at the end of his stay. Dozier, on the other hand, excels with respect to its strong focus on these skills throughout the regular lesson plans. Indeed, even the vocational instructors insist that students demonstrate perfect understanding of the subject material in the classroom before they can begin their hands-on instruction. A teacher at a low-performing program, in contrast, stated, "I have…experienced difficulty with developing a reading curriculum."

The high-performing programs also offer their students a much more diverse supply of instructional strategies than do the average and low-performing programs. For example, teachers at Pinellas Boot Camp were observed engaging their students in research projects, computer activities, creative writing assignments, student presentations, educational videos, discussions, peer tutoring, small group assignments, and more. Similarly, Dozier provides computer-assisted tutorial, remedial and literacy instruction, intensive reading and math courses, remedial reading and math courses, small group instruction, individual instruction, peer tutoring, thematic units, hands-on projects, games, etc. In contrast, teachers at one of the low-performing programs were observed providing no real instruction; rather, students sat at their desks working independently on workbook assignments while the teachers sat at their desks.

Educational Personnel and Teachers

Although the previous best practice areas are clearly important, educational personnel and teachers may be the most critical factor in distinguishing between the three program types. While the numbers presented in Table 7.4-6 indicate that the teachers and educational staff at the high-performing programs are indeed better trained and more experienced, they may not adequately reflect how some of these specific practices combine to create a stable and pleasant working environment.

Table 7.4-6: Educational Personnel and Teachers Scores by Program Type

COMPONENTS	Program Type *(N)*		
	High *(5)*	**Average *(2)***	**Low *(2)***
Teacher Certification	1.6	0.8	0.3
Teaching Experience	1.6	1.5	0.5
Well-Designed Recruitment and Retention Practices	1.4	0.5	0.0
Teacher Training and Preparation	1.1	1.0	0.0
OVERALL	**1.43**	**0.94**	**0.19**

More teachers at the high-performing programs are certified–and also teach in their areas of certification to a much greater extent–than the teachers at the average and low-performing programs. In fact, students at one of the low-performing programs described the effect of teacher certification on their educations; for example, one explained that, if she could, she would change, "the teachers. I would make sure that one of the three teachers majored in English, and one in math, so they know what they are doing." Another student said, "I'm tired of wanting help and they don't know, and [it] takes them forever to figure it out. I want a teacher that can be like 'okay, this is how you do it.'" Although the teachers at the three program types tend to have a similar number of years of teaching experience (15 years being the average for all three program types), the teachers at the high-performing programs have had more experience teaching at their particular program. Specifically, the average teacher in the high-performing programs has been at his or her school for six years (with a range of 8-324 months), while the average teacher in the average performing programs has been there for four years (with a range of 8-120 months), and the average teacher in the low- performing programs has been there for less than a year (with a range of 1-13 months).

This difference in educational staff stability may partly reflect the differing recruitment and retention policies among the three program types. While the administrators at the low-performing and average programs typically recruit teachers simply by placing an ad in a local newspaper or on an educational website, high-performing program administrators have a much more rigorous process for acquiring highly qualified teachers. For example, Avon Park generally promotes from within and pays for additional training so that general staff members can become paraprofessionals, receive training, and eventually become certified teachers. Additionally, Avon Park only hires vocational

instructors who have at least six years of experience in their field. Dozier has a different recruitment philosophy. Dozier's lead educator looks for compatibility when seeking a new teacher. Specifically, he attempts to hire only those certified teachers whose personalities and teaching strategies are compatible with the program. Moreover, Dozier also offers a mentoring program wherein a new teacher is paired with a more experienced teacher for approximately one year. The high-performing programs also appear to provide more teacher support, both in the form of tangible resources (e.g., supply money, classroom space) and intangible assets (e.g., encouragement, educational opportunities). For example, high-performing programs offer a diverse range of professional development opportunities, including training in such areas as multicultural education, dropout prevention, ESE, English speakers of other languages (ESOL), reading comprehension, career planning, educational technology, online college reading courses, etc. Average and low-performing programs, on the other hand, offer more limited teacher training and professional development opportunities. (Refer to Chapter 5 for a more detailed discussion of teacher quality.)

Section Summary

Table 7.4-7 below summarizes the results from the previous subsections by averaging the best practice component scores for each of the six best practice areas by each of the three program types.

Table 7.4-7: Best Practice Score Summary by Program Type

BEST PRACTICE AREAS	Program Type *(N)*		
	High *(5)*	**Average *(2)***	**Low *(2)***
School Environment	1.08	1.11	0.26
Resources and Community Partnerships	1.33	0.53	0.04
Assessments, Diagnostics, and Guidance	1.3	1.13	0.33
Exit and Aftercare Services	0.98	0.58	0.17
Curriculum and Instruction	1.28	0.58	0.4
Educational Personnel and Teachers	1.43	0.94	0.19
OVERALL	**1.23**	**0.81**	**0.23**

As illustrated in Table 7.4-7, the three program types differ considerably in several of the best practice areas, with high-performing programs generally scoring higher than the average and low-performing programs, and the average programs scoring higher than the low-performing programs. In particular, the most substantial differences in the quality and quantity of best practices between the high, average, and low performing programs are in the areas of Resources and Community Partnerships; Curriculum and Instruction; and Educational Personnel and Teachers, respectively. This trend of decreasing best practice area scores as one moves from high to average and then to low-performing

programs is also apparent in the areas of Exit and Aftercare Services and Assessments, Diagnostics, and Guidance. The one exception to this pattern is in the area of School Environment, where the average programs scored slightly higher than the high-performing programs. Overall, however, the high-performing programs exhibited a greater quantity of best practices, as well as more innovative approaches to their implementation. They also evidence greater program-wide dedication to the maintenance of these practices and an extension of some of these policies and services beyond what the literature recommends. Thus, it appears that the average and, in particular, the low-performing programs would certainly benefit from visiting these high-performing programs, a possibility that will be realized in upcoming years through the establishment of demonstration sites.

7.5 Summary Discussion

This chapter was designed to answer three general research questions regarding differences in the implementation and maintenance of best practices across the three program types: (1) *to what degree do the programs as a whole exhibit and incorporate the best practices identified in the literature*?; (2) *what are the specific differences in program practices and processes for high- versus average- and low-performing programs*?; and (3) *what specific program processes appear to be related to best practices*? In sum, these differences are substantial.

First, it is clear that the programs as a whole exhibit and incorporate the identified best practices to varying degrees. Specifically–and to answer the second research question–high and average programs exhibit a greater *quantity* of best practices than do low-performing programs. High-performing programs also generally exhibit a greater *quality* of best practice implementation than do either the average or low-performing programs. These qualitative differences are most apparent in the areas of Resources and Community Partnerships, Curriculum and Instruction, and Educational Personnel and Teachers. Another important difference was in the area of Exit and Aftercare Services, although this difference was obscured when the individual program scores were averaged for each of the three program types. Specifically, only Pinellas Boot Camp and Avon Park exhibited strong exit and aftercare services.

One of the most salient findings from these case studies, however, was not captured in the scoring rubric: stability among program providers, administrators, and educational staff appears to decrease as one moves from the high-performing programs to the average and then low-performing programs. The low-performing programs have experienced a series of provider and personnel turnover, which appears to have impacted their ability to implement and maintain an adequate amount of best practices. While the direction of the causal relationship between stability and number of best practices is not necessarily clear from these results, it is abundantly clear that these variables are strongly correlated. For example, high attrition rates among the low-performing programs have, in all likelihood, negatively affected their communal organization, particularly communication and cooperation at the program level (i.e., between education, custody, and care staff) and at

the school district level (i.e., between the program and school district). This lack of communal organization, in turn, seems to have resulted in a less open, honest, and pleasant working environment (which may then generate a cyclical effect by reinforcing the programs' propensities toward high attrition rates). In a similar way, high attrition rates at the program level may also adversely affect other best practice areas, such as Assessments, Diagnostics, and Guidance, for example, as constant turnovers may hinder the ability of the program to maintain a rigorous entry assessment process. Essentially, the extent of the ramifications of high turnover rates is unknown, but it is clear that the overall impact is decidedly negative.

Thus, the third research question–*what specific program processes appear to be related to best practices?*–is partially answered by the issues of stability and attrition. In addition, efforts to overcome geographic isolation and security level problems by actively seeking community and local business partnerships also appear to be related to best practices. In particular, despite Dozier's classification as a high-risk facility, the lead educator and program administrator have succeeded in acquiring a wide variety of community and business partnerships, which have provided their students with invaluable work experience and ties to the community. Moreover, these partnerships and community ties have also resulted in abundant learning resources, such as libraries, vocational training equipment, and computer labs. While the pursuit of extra funding opportunities is not among the best practices identified in Chapter 6, it should be considered given the benefits of additional funding for the students and staff alike.

Another key program process appears to be a strong emphasis on reading, writing, and speech. As Chapter 6 explained, the average juvenile justice student is severely lacking in these skills, and only the high-performing programs demonstrated a commitment to improving the language arts and reading abilities of their students. Consequently, the results suggest that a curriculum that emphasizes these skills is strongly related to program performance (while Chapter 6 concluded that such a curriculum is strongly related to desistance from delinquency following release). The high-performing programs generally have highly qualified and experienced reading teachers and/or reading and speech specialists who ensure that the programs have strong reading curricula, abundant reading materials, and the ability to tailor their lesson plans to the specific needs of their students. While this is reflective of the amount of resources the programs have (which is, in turn, reflective of community ties and funding opportunities), it also reflects teacher quality and a program-wide dedication to reading and language arts. Individualized curricula also played a large role in distinguishing the high-performing programs from the average and low-performing performing programs. The high-performing programs demonstrated several ways this can be done, even in a classroom containing students of varying ability levels. Assignments with differing difficulty levels was one approach, while specifically tailored computer programs and self-paced curricula were others.

In the area of Teachers and Educational Personnel, the high-performing programs again offer solutions to legal requirements. For example, while Avon Park only hires certified vocational instructors, it has developed a process of hiring its academic teachers from

within and assisting with their certification process so that by the time the employee reaches the classroom, he or she is professionally certified. Dozier's efforts to hire educational staff whose personalities and teaching behaviors appear to be compatible with the established standards and school environment have also proved to be successful processes of recruiting and retaining quality teachers. Moreover, the high-performing programs also have lengthy and comprehensive teacher induction and training processes that are lacking in the average and low-performing programs. Mentors and wide varieties of professional development opportunities, along with administrative encouragement and support, clearly facilitate new teachers' positive initial entry and later experiences within the programs.

Exit and aftercare services are also a strong distinguishing feature of the high-performing program category, Pinellas Boot Camp and Avon Park in particular. While the existing empirical literature on best practices strongly endorses the provision of such services, by and large, the sample failed to exhibit such a component to their programs. Pinellas Boot Camp was able to do so, first by a program-wide recognition of the need for aftercare services, and second by establishing cooperative agreements with nearby public schools. Avon Park sought a federal grant and consequently gained a partnership with Street Smart, which currently provides a wide range of exit and aftercare services.

The larger purpose of the case studies presented here has to do with the selection, responsibilities, and potential benefits of demonstration sites. First, the demonstration sites will have several responsibilities, including maintaining high QA scores, providing technical assistance to programs, allowing other programs and persons to visit, presenting at conferences, agreeing to be featured in JJEEP's website and Annual Report, and having program representatives serve as peer reviewers in JJEEP's QA process. Once the demonstration sites have been formally established as such, the lower performing programs may access them directly through phone calls, the Internet (depending on the specific demonstration site), and pre-arranged on-site visits. The criteria for becoming a demonstration site are discussed in relation to the best practices scoring rubric in Section 7.3. Specifically, these criteria are: (1) 80% or more of the indicators are observable and common practice, and (2) in at least one area of best practices, all indicators are observable and common practice.

Given the substantially lower scores for the average and low-performing programs, it appears that they would certainly benefit from visiting these high-performing programs, a possibility that will be realized in upcoming years through the establishment of demonstration sites. A second benefit of the demonstration sites will be the use of the resulting empirical case study results to inform the QA process. In particular, JJEEP will use this information to revise and update the QA standards, as needed.

Moreover, JJEEP has additional plans for future case study and demonstration site research. First, JJEEP will continue to update the literature review with any new empirical evidence regarding best practices in juvenile justice education. Second, JJEEP plans to continue studying residential programs in 2006 and then expand its focus to include detention and day treatment programs by 2007. Third, JJEEP will endeavor to

locate a more representative sample of programs during 2006. Specifically, JJEEP will be looking for a female-student demonstration site; possible low and maximum risk high- and low-performing programs; and low-performing programs with maximum capacities exceeding 100 (recall that the two low-performing programs reviewed in 2005 had maximum capacities of 20 and 30). Finally, JJEEP plans to formally designate the high-performing programs presented in this chapter as demonstration sites and then report on the experiences of these sites and their visitors in the 2006 Annual Report.

In conclusion, the case study project is an ongoing project that continually needs refining and updating, yet the benefits of this project are potentially enormous. The case studies provide much needed current empirical evidence of not only best practices, but also the processes through which these programs implement and maintain them, using both quantitative and qualitative data. Moreover, the potential for the demonstration sites to ultimately aid in improving the performance of the lower performing programs could serve to raise the quality of juvenile justice education throughout the State of Florida.