

Memorandum #3

June 30, 2019

TO: Education Committee of the JJPOC

From: Peter Leone

RE: Principles and Recommendations

In memorandum #1, I provided information about funding options and administrative arrangements for education services in Missouri, Oregon, and Utah.¹ Memorandum #2 addressed issues of quality control or quality assurance and discussed measurement and accountability. In thinking about the myriad of options and challenges facing the education committee as it develops its recommendations, I think it would be useful for the committee to agree on principles, consistent with legislative mandates, to guide deliberations.

Presented below are suggested principles for the education committee. Several recommendations concerning infrastructure, quality control, and transition follow these principles

Principles

- Standards for education services for incarcerated youth should be consistent with those for public school children in the state.
- Funding for services and supports for the education of incarcerated youth should be driven by a formula that takes into account the mobility, academic disadvantage, and the considerable number of youth who are English learners and who are eligible for special education services.
- One agency or division within an agency should have primary responsibility and authority for education services all incarcerated youth in the state.
- Transition of youth from local schools to state agency placements as directed by the courts or justice agencies should be seamless. Expectations, responsibilities, and outcomes for agencies and personnel within agencies responsible for entry and reentry should be explicit and measurable.
- The agency or division within an agency should report annually on the operations of the education programs serving youth in the justice system.

Recommendations

Infrastructure & Funding

- Create a special school district for education programs serving incarcerated and court-involved youth. Create an independent school board for the special school district.

¹ I also understand that some member of the education committee have looked into funding and administrative arrangements for education services for incarcerated youth in Massachusetts within the past year.

- Enable the special school district to receive CT average per pupil costs in addition to supplemental support for a high need population.
- Require the special school district to achieve accreditation from an association of colleges and secondary schools within 36 months of its creation.

Quality Control & Accountability

- Develop a framework for education accountability that includes educators, the courts, custody and security, sending and receiving school districts and programs, and the CDE.
- Require education providers to no less than semi-annually provide student performance data to the administrators of the special school district and its school board. Ensure that reporting measures are tailored to experiences of students in short and long-term placements.
- Require education providers to develop partnerships and programs with local education agencies, non-profit cultural groups, local industries, and businesses.

Transition (Entry & Reentry)^{2 3}

- Establish explicit expectations and roles for key players in the transition of youth into and out of court placements.
- Through the special school district, create mechanisms to ensure that sending and receiving schools and programs provide services and supports that maximize youths' success.

² This area will need to be further developed by education committee members in the coming months.

³ See Reentry Myth Busters: Youth Access to Education upon Reentry - <https://tinyurl.com/y4cxewyq> for a discussion of challenges as well as link to resources about transition and reentry.