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**Ohio Department of Youth Services**

## Responsible Public Policy

The Department of Youth Services (DYS) touches the lives of thousands of youth in Ohio. Beyond youth in DHS facilities and those on parole, DHS funds and supports over 680 direct service programs throughout the state offering more than 130,000 youth (based on annual program admissions) opportunities and services to effect positive change.

### The Buckeye United School District

With June comes the official start of summer, and that means school is out, but not at DHS! The Buckeye United School District (BUSD), operated by DHS and chartered by the State Board of Education, offers year-round classes to students grades 6-12 through an array of academic courses. BUSD meets all of the Ohio Department of Education standards, and all educators are licensed in their respective areas. The 5 schools within DHS facilities offer basic academics (math, English/language arts, science and social studies), special education, career technical education and electives.

The education staff at DHS provides quality instruction to students. BUSD has a student-teacher ratio of less than 5 to 1. In addition to teachers, each DHS school has a licensed principal, assistant principal, literacy coach, guidance counselor, librarian, permanent substitute teacher, classroom aide and transition coordinator. DHS is proud that Tecumseh High School (Ohio River Valley Juvenile Correctional Facility) teacher Mary Latorre was named the Teacher of the Year by the Correctional Education Association (CEA) of Ohio and the Teacher of the Year for CEA Region III at a May 2011 conference held in Madison, Wisconsin.

#### **Continued Enhancement**

Youth committed to DHS perform, on average, four to five years below expected grade level for their ages. More than 50% of youth receive special education services. Literacy programs called "My Reading Coach" and "Scholastic Read 180" help youth catch up on their reading abilities. From May 2010 through May 2011, 185 youth received a GED, and 51 youth earned a high school diploma.

Career technical programs are offered in each school and provide youth with opportunities to receive education and training that will equip them for employment. Current offerings include Transition Skills, Personal Development, Administrative Office Technology, Horticulture, Framing and Roofing, Automobile Technology, Career Based Intervention and Graphic Arts. During the current school year, more than 90,000 hours of career technical instruction has been provided to students.

School curriculum is supported through technology in the classroom. The Customized Student Learning System enables teachers to consistently monitor students' academic gains. Computers in all classrooms assist teachers in providing instruction through the "A+ Curriculum." Each classroom is also equipped with modern technology that includes projection devices and interactive whiteboards.

Reentry, the process of preparing youth to return to their homes and communities, is incorporated into our educational system. Each school has a teacher who teaches reentry skills. Youth receive a Career Passport that includes educational achievements and career goals. A Transition Coordinator at each DHS school works with youth, the Parole Officer and the community to help with the reentry process.

In the coming months, we will roll out a Peer Tutoring Program to link youth graduates with youth who may benefit from tutoring. We will also work to expand career technical program offerings to include growing job fields such as green energy and computer repair.