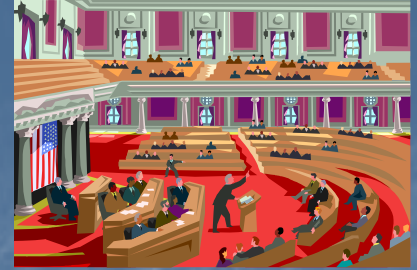


SJR 327 Legislation:

the joint subcommittee shall...



- ▶ *evaluate the existing education programs for prisoners in Virginia, including the advantages and benefits of the program for prisoners, their families, and the community, and its effect on recidivism*



- ▶ *review Prisoner education programs in other states*



- ▶ *consider financial aid alternatives to assist inmates in accessing college, and ways to fund college education programs for prisoners in the Commonwealth*



College Programs Offered in Virginia's Correctional Centers

➤ Federal Funding - US Department of Education:

- Youth – Title I Part D: 15% of funding dedicated to transition (includes college)
2 Juvenile Correctional Centers – 62 Student Participants annually
- Adults – Incarcerated Youth Offender Grant - created by Congress in 1998
17 Adult Correctional Facilities - 567 Student Participants annually
Virginia received \$432K for FY07 – will fund about 550 students
- 7 Virginia Community Colleges provide on-site courses: Southside, Southwest
Germanna, Paul D Camp, J. Sargeant Reynolds, Piedmont, Lord Fairfax

➤ Private Scholarships:

- Charles Coe & Sunshine Ladies Foundation Scholarships for men at
Coffeewood Correctional Center
- Elizabeth Kates Foundation Scholarships for women at
FCCW and VCCW

➤ Veterans Education Benefits

- eligible if received Honorable or General Discharge w/in 10 yrs

➤ Self Pay, Family/Friend Financial Support



The vast majority of Virginia inmates do not have access to higher education

- There are **12,900** Virginia inmates who have a High School Diploma or GED, yet **95.6%** do not have access to college - requests from eligible inmates far surpass available funding.
- Inmates who are **age 26 or older**, or have **sentences longer than 5 years** have almost no access to college, as they are **not eligible** for Federal Grant funding.
- **Few Associates Degrees** are being earned by incarcerated students (just 4-5 per year) because the Federal Grant "caps" spending to **\$1,500** per student annually.



Pell Grants: created in 1972



Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994

SEC. 20411. AWARDS OF PELL GRANTS TO PRISONERS PROHIBITED.

"No basic grant shall be awarded under this subpart to any individual who is incarcerated in any Federal or State penal institution."



Legislation to remove inmate access to Pell Grants was passed despite these facts:

- Less than one tenth of 1% of the total \$6 billion spent on Pell Grants in 93-94 went to incarcerated college students. Of the 3.4 million student recipients of Pell Grants, less than 30,000 were incarcerated students. (Taylor, 1994)
- No students were ever denied Pell Grants because prisoners were participating in the program, as these grants are noncompetitive, needs-based funds available to all students who qualify. (Institute for Higher Ed. Policy, 1994)

Results within three years of the elimination of Pell Grant eligibility - nationwide:

- The percentage of prisons offering associates degree programs decreased from 71% to 37%
- The percentage of prisons offering bachelors degree programs decreased from 48% to 10%
- More than 350 college programs at prisons nationwide were scrapped

(Tewkesbury, 2003)

► *Dallas Pell, daughter of Senator Claiborne Pell leads the "Pell Grants to Public Safety Initiative", which advocates for the restoration of Pell Grants to the incarcerated.*

Post-Release Outcomes Study - Virginia Tech (2006)

Adult Incarcerated Youth Offender Grant

This study determined that inmates who participate in college
have significantly lower recidivism rates*

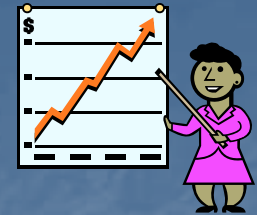
For the 220 students released in FY01 and FY02, both academic and vocational IYOP college participants recidivated at a lower rate than all ex-offenders released during the same time frame.

Fiscal Year	Recidivism Rate All Inmates	Recidivism Rate IYOP Academic College Students	Decrease in Recidivism	Percent Decrease in Recidivism
00-01	29.3%	17.6%	11.7	39.9%
01-02	25.0%	12.6%	12.4	49.6%

Fiscal Year	Recidivism Rate All Inmates	Recidivism Rate IYOP Vocational College Students	Decrease in Recidivism	Percent Decrease in Recidivism
00-01	29.3%	24.2%	5.1	17.4%
01-02	25.0%	11.1%	13.9	55.6%

* Recidivism defined as "recommitment in a Virginia correctional institution within three years of release"

Post-Release Outcomes Study - Virginia Tech (2006) *Adult Incarcerated Youth Offender Grant*



This study determined that inmates who participate in college
have higher post-release earnings

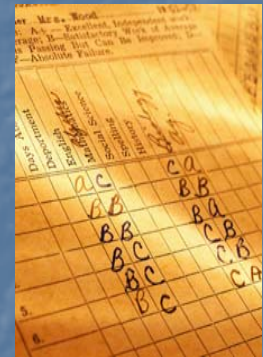
- Students enrolled in academic IYOP college coursework have 13% greater average post-release quarterly earnings (\$2,639) than all ex-offenders released (\$2,329).
- IYOP college students who earned Associates Degrees had average quarterly earnings of \$5,727 - more than double the average earned by all ex-offenders (\$2,329).
- IYOP college students with higher GPAs (average grades of “B” or higher) earned from vocational coursework have slightly higher average post-release earnings (\$2,341) than all ex-offenders released (\$2,329). *(Lower GPAs not compared due to sample size [n =27]).*



Post-Release Outcomes Study - Virginia Tech (2006) *Adult Incarcerated Youth Offender Grant*

This study determined that inmates who participate in college
**have higher Grade Point Averages and
more frequently enroll in college after release**

- > IYOP college students outperformed non-incarcerated students enrolled in the same courses on campus; 85% of the IYOP academic college students earned average grades of "C" or better, compared to 80% of the non-incarcerated students.
- > For IYOP students enrolled in vocational coursework, 98% earned average grades of "C" or better, as compared to 75.0% of non-incarcerated students.
- > About 11% of IYOP Academic program students and 14.8% of vocational students enrolled in Virginia colleges post-release, compared to 3.6% of all ex-offenders.



Virginia Tech's Outcomes Study is consistent with numerous other studies that have concluded that participation in higher education makes a significant positive impact on inmates, their families, and society.

Other Recidivism Studies:



- Analysis of 14 studies concluded that “recidivism rates for former prisoners who had participated in postsecondary correctional education were, on average, 46% lower than for ex-offenders who had not taken college classes.” (Chappell, 2004)
- Ohio study of 1,000 former prisoners – “completing an associate’s degree had a particularly significant impact, reducing the likelihood of re-incarceration by 62%.” (Batiuk et al, 2005)
- “Texas prisoners who earn associates degrees while incarcerated return to prison at a rate of 27% compared to 43% for the prison population as a whole.” (Windham School District, 2004)
- “This “dollars and cents” argument of lowering recidivism is perhaps the strongest and most “logical” argument for increased/renewed public funding for higher education in prisons, especially given the current fiscal crisis many states face.” (Fine et al, 2001)

Studies Finding Benefits to Children, Families, and the Community:



- **Children** of incarcerated parents enrolled in college programs express pride in their parents' academic achievements, and become **more motivated to attend college themselves**. (Fine et al, 2001)
- The **educational level of a parent is a clear predictor of both the educational achievements of the child** and the level of parental involvement in the child's education. As the majority of prisoners are parents, the education of adults in prison can have a positive and long-lasting impact upon the lives of their children. (Brown, 1989)
- The **children of educated mothers do better in school**, stay longer in school, are held back less often, have higher educational aspirations, **and are more likely to go to college**. (Fine et al, 2001)
- Providing higher education to prisoners can save money in other ways; the prevention of crime through reduced recidivism **helps to eliminate lost wages** of the inmate while incarcerated or **costs to the inmates families**. (Open Society Research Brief, 1997)
- Citizens who attend college tend to contribute more to the social good through means such as **greater contribution to the community** and higher participation in civic life such as volunteering. (Erisman & Contardo, 2005)
- Added savings are gained by reducing recidivism, including **reduced reliance on welfare** and other publicly subsidized programs, and **increased taxes** paid by formerly incarcerated people employed in higher wage jobs (Erisman and Contardo, 2005)
- A college education while incarcerated gives offenders hope that they can **escape the cycles of poverty and violence** that have dominated their lives. It becomes a second chance that can work to **better both the formerly incarcerated person and the society in which he or she lives**. (Erisman & Contardo, 2005)



Studies Finding Benefits to Prison Management:

- Postsecondary education produces positive results within the prison itself, including improved communication between corrections staff and inmates, the development of **positive peer role models** for prisoners, and **reduced problems with disciplinary infractions**. (Taylor, 1992)
- A survey of inmates at an Indiana prison showed that prisoners enrolled in college classes committed 75% **fewer infractions** than the average inmate. (Taylor, 1994)
- Inmate students are better behaved, **less likely to engage in violence**, and are more likely to have a positive impact on the general prison population. (Taylor, 1993))
- Educated inmates are a stabilizing influence in an often chaotic environment, **enhancing the safety and security** of all who live and work in the correctional facility. (Elikann, 1996)
- Well-run, high-quality higher education programs in correctional facilities can **inspire correctional officers to pursue additional education**; in some instances, this has led to scholarship monies being made available to those who work inside prisons. (Open Society Research Brief, 1997)

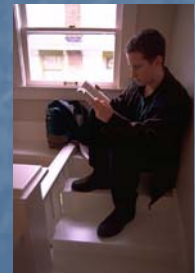


Prison College Programs: What's Available in Other States



Learning to Reduce Recidivism: A 50-state analysis of postsecondary education policy Institute of Higher Education Policy, 2005

- Received survey responses from 45 states & Federal Bureau of Prisons
- All but two states are offering post-secondary education programs in prisons
- Only 5% of prisoners have access to postsecondary education
- 28,500 students enrolled nationwide *(note: missing data from 7 states)*
- 2,191 degrees were earned in 03-04 *(note: missing data from 5 states)*
- **47% using State Appropriations to fund higher education in prisons**





Boston University "Prison Education Program" (PEP) – University donates **\$100,000** annually to offer classes at four Massachusetts state prisons.



Patten College in Oakland California offer classes at San Quentin State Penitentiary; all college Faculty are **volunteers** (valued at about \$8,000 per student annually).

The Chancellor's Office of the California Community College System has determined that incarcerated students are eligible for **Board of Governors Fee Waivers**, a need-based program available to California residents with incomes less than \$14,000



North Carolina state government has made a strong commitment to funding post-secondary correctional education, as indicated by **600 associates degrees** earned by inmates in 03-04.



Texas uses **Public Education Grants** to fund inmate college programs. As of 1996, they require prisoners to reimburse the state for the cost of their education after they are released from prison. As of 2005, **3,000 former prisoners had paid off their debt in full**. Of the total funds invested by the state, 25% have been returned; **\$250,000** has been added to the budget for prison higher education through the reimbursement program. In 03-04, Texas had 6,462 inmates working toward Associates Degrees. Total degrees earned under this program as of 2004: **415 Associates Degrees, 58 Bachelors Degrees, 22 Masters Degrees**



Utah community colleges charge prisoners a **greatly reduced tuition rate** – about \$100 per semester.



Oregon has a **private foundation** called “New Directions” - it funds 26% of the state’s incarcerated college students. Donors include individuals, businesses, and local community colleges.



Minnesota legislators created the “**Minnesota Correctional Education Foundation**” in 2003. This charity’s goal is to fund college classes for 350 prisoners at five correctional facilities each year. Individuals and private non-profit colleges have been the largest donors.



New Mexico began an interactive distance education program in 2003. Eastern New Mexico University provides classes via a **secure, high-speed network** to a server at the university. DOC pays \$215,000 annually for 400 students’ tuition, fees, and textbooks.



Nevada Community Colleges provide **tuition waivers** for 1/3 of the state’s incarcerated students; this enables prisons to meet the minimum enrollment numbers needed to keep the post-secondary program operational.



Policy Recommendations from Institute of Higher Education (IHEP) Analysis:



- Reinstate **Pell Grant** eligibility for incarcerated men and women; expand the federal IYOP grant by raising the age limit to and increasing the annual per-student spending cap
- Increase **state appropriations** for postsecondary correctional education programs
- Allow incarcerated students to receive **state need-based grants** as low-income students
- Increase **private funding** for postsecondary correctional education programs by soliciting resources from foundations, colleges and universities, corporations, and private individuals
- Encourage experimentation with **distance education** methods, including internet-based distance education using secure network connections

"State policymakers, whose constituents benefit most from reduced recidivism, should work to expand state funding...by allowing prisoners to receive state grants for low income students, and by appropriating sufficient funds to allow state agencies to operate post-secondary correctional education programs."

"If we are serious about preventing and reducing crime, it is critical to adopt the most effective, humane, and cost-efficient means of doing so.

All evidence supports that education is a reasonably priced, highly efficient, and continually beneficial method of crime prevention; clearly one of the most successful means we have.

It is critical for these programs be fully funded to allow for the maximum number of qualified participants."

"Higher education in prisons reduces recidivism and has the potential to save significant expense to financially strapped state governments.

It offers a number of benefits to prisoners, correctional institutions, prisoners' families, and communities.

It represents an important approach to successful crime prevention."

- Lumina Foundation for Education, 2005

"Developing effective postsecondary correctional education will require visionary leaders and consensus and commitment among stakeholders.

Leaders must be willing to commit substantial financial resources for creative new solutions to the many challenges that obstruct delivery of higher education to prisoners."