



**FY2008 RECOMMENDATION/FY08-GP24 EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR OFFENDERS AND STAFF**

**Status:** Partial Implementation

**Actions/Updates**

**2012 UPDATE**

The report addressing HB10-1112 may be found at [http://www.doc.state.co.us/sites/default/files/opa/EducationReport\\_final\\_RE.pdf](http://www.doc.state.co.us/sites/default/files/opa/EducationReport_final_RE.pdf)

**2011 OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ACTION STEPS**

The Department of Correction's report on HB10-1112 will address this issue. The report is in progress but once it is complete, CCJJ staff will provide a link on the Commission website.

**2010 UPDATE**

*Implementation underway.* Department of Corrections officials report that an agreement was reached with the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) and Pueblo Community College (PCC) to ensure that offenders enrolled in DOC vocational programs receive community college credit. Offender students will now be entered into BANNER (CCCS student tracking system) and also receive PCC transcripts. CCCS has dedicated funding for one FTE to be used by PCC for this program. PCC hosted a training session for all affected DOC instructors. Initial student enrollment has been completed. The number of students enrolled in these programs was not reported by DOC.

In addition, DOC officials report that it maintains two training academies, the Correctional Training Academy and the RECLA Training Academy which is within the Division of Adult Parole, Community Corrections & YOS, and provides training opportunities for staff.

Due to fiscal restraints and integration issues with DCIS (DOC's MIS), the Department's Division of Education was not able to move forward with obtaining an outside vendor for offender educational tracking. The Division of Education worked internally with DOC's Business Technologies and the Office of Planning and Analysis to improve offender educational reporting. Additional internal improvement steps and other outside avenues are still being pursued but budget conditions will probably prohibit purchase of a comprehensive system at this time.

**2009 ACTION/IMPLEMENTATION**

The Department of Corrections reports that it is committed to the continued expansion of its current practice. Tuition is reimbursed for staff at a rate of 50 percent for undergraduate costs and 40 percent for graduate studies. Additionally, DOC has agreements with the community college system and Adams State College to provide educational opportunities for offenders.

These agreements describe a process that facilitates the transition of a student from one educational institution to another, and from one education level to the next with a minimal duplication of coursework. DOC intends to increase the number of these agreements by December 2009.

### **2009 IMPACT**

DOC intends to develop a system to record participation and course completions by December 2009, for both staff and inmates. This information will be presented in future Commission reports.

### **2009 BARRIERS**

The Department of Corrections notes that barriers to the expansion of educational opportunities include funding, timing, and sequencing of the expansion. The Commission suggested that a short-term, multi-disciplinary working group be developed to explore funding sources; this group has not been developed.

### **Description**

Post secondary educational opportunities should be expanded for both inmates and staff.

### **Agencies Responsible**

Department of Corrections, Department of Higher Education, community college system

### **Discussion**

*Implementation of this recommendation is underway. Studies of offenders have found that the higher the educational achievement, the lower the recidivism rate. Further, a well-trained and professional correctional staff is necessary to prepare offenders for successful re-entry into the community. The Department of Correction's emphasis on this recommendation is consistent with the Commission's statutory mandate to "focus on evidence-based recidivism reduction initiatives..." [C.R.S. 16-11.3-103(1)].*