



Report on the Response of the
Department of Correctional Education
to the Impact of the Aging of
Virginia's Population

Submitted on
November 15, 2007

Pursuant to legislation enacted by the Virginia General Assembly of Virginia, the Department of Correctional Education submits this report of its progress in addressing the impact of the aging of Virginia's population.



Agency Head's Signature

11-15-2007

Date of Signature

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Correctional Education (DCE) has been providing quality educational services throughout both the Virginia adult and juvenile correctional systems for more than 30 years. With a continued commitment to excellence, DCE aims to provide the highest quality of educational services possible in the Commonwealth's correctional systems. DCE was designated as a local education agency in 1991 by the Virginia General Assembly. Since DCE is an educational agency, the seniors that we serve are the students that are 65 and older enrolled in our schools located in the Department of Correction's adult correctional centers.

According to HB 110 and HB 854, each state agency is required to: (i) designate staff to review agency policies and programs and identify opportunities to make those policies and programs more accommodating to seniors and persons with disabilities; (ii) include in agency strategic plan, an analysis of how the aging of the population impacts the agency and how the agency is responding, and (iii) report to the Governor and the General Assembly on the agency's progress in addressing the impact of the aging of the population.

In accordance with HB 110, information was gathered to determine how many seniors were served by the Department of Correctional Education in Fiscal Year 2007. An adult must have a reading level below that of the 8th grade in order to be eligible for academic classes in our schools. The information that was gathered showed there was a considerable decrease in the number of seniors served in FY 07 than in FY 06. The number of seniors served this fiscal year went from 101 to 80. This could be due to a number of reasons but is most likely due to the renovations and changes that took place at Deerfield Correctional Center during this calendar year.

Educational services were suspended for a period of time because the institution was changed temporarily to a reception and classification center. DCE teachers were pulled away from their classrooms in order to assist with the testing of inmates that were newly transferred to the Deerfield Correctional Center. Next year, we expect to see a considerable increase in the number of seniors served.

DCE will continue to improve the delivery of educational services to students age 65 and over by implementing the following changes:

1. DCE will strive to improve resources in our DCE libraries by continuing to provide large print TABE tests for our seniors, adding more large print books to our libraries and books on tape.
2. DCE will add a vocational program to the DCE School located at Deerfield Correctional Center which is specifically designed for geriatric and assisted living inmates.
3. DCE will provide seniors with information to aide them in independent living.
4. DCE will also move toward offering therapeutic recreational programs and activities for our seniors.

AGENCY DESCRIPTION

Mission

The Department of Correctional Education's mission is to provide quality educational programs that enable incarcerated youth and adults to become responsible, productive, tax-paying members of their communities.

Roles

The Department of Correctional Education, a separate executive branch agency, is an independent school district with its own school board that operates in cooperation with the Department of Corrections and the Department of Juvenile Justice. DCE Juvenile Schools are accredited by the Virginia Department of Education. DCE provides educational services in adult and youth correctional facilities throughout Virginia. All academic and career and technical education teachers meet state certification and endorsement standards.

The Department of Correctional Education provides educational opportunities to incarcerated youth and adults who have been unsuccessful in the public schools and their communities. DCE programs are geared toward helping individuals realize their potential and become productive members of society. The educational programs benefit the public through assisting inmates to become productive and taxpaying citizens, make positive contributions to society and, most importantly, reduce criminal recidivism.

Responsibilities

We Fight Crime Through Education by:

- Providing educational services that allow adult and youth offenders the opportunity to improve their literacy, earn a GED, or finish high school while incarcerated in either the juvenile or adult correctional facilities.
- Focusing on instruction which will enhance each student's employment possibilities and life skills.
- Aiding in transitioning students into the job market and their communities.

**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION
REPORT ON AGING POPULATION
NOVEMBER 2007**

The Department of Correctional Education (DCE) provides educational opportunities that enable youth and adults committed to correctional facilities to integrate successfully into the community as contributing productive citizens.

The Number of Persons Served

DCE offers educational services in adult correctional centers throughout the state of Virginia. A report was run to find out how many students age 65 and over was serviced in our adult schools during Fiscal Year 2007 and Fiscal Year 2006. The results were as follows:

Fiscal Year 2007		Fiscal Year 2006	
<u>Ages</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Ages</u>	<u>Number</u>
65-74	80	65-74	101
75-84	13	75-84	9
85 & over	0	85 & over	0

The number of seniors who were eligible for academic services during Fiscal Year 2007 was 582 and the number during Fiscal Year 2006 was 424.

The report shows that there was a significant decrease in the number of seniors who received educational services in Fiscal Year 2007 in comparison to Fiscal Year 2006. The reason for the considerable reduction could be due to a number of reasons including inmates being released from incarceration, the DCE enrollment waiting list, and the transfer of inmates to other institutions. But the decrease in numbers is most likely due to the changes and renovations that took place this year at Deerfield Correctional Center. Deerfield is a correctional center specifically designed for geriatric and assisted living inmates and hundreds of new beds were added to this facility this year. Due to the increased capacity to service inmates, the facility for a brief time changed to a reception and classification center in order to process in the new transfers. During this time, DCE classes were suspended so DCE teachers could help with the intake and testing process of the new inmates. Next year, we expect to see a considerable increase in the number of seniors served.

Agency Services

We offer academic, vocational and transitional programs to our students. Our students that are 65 and over are eligible to take all of the classes that students 64 and younger can take. The majority of our seniors take Adult Basic Education courses I-V, Fast Track GED, and/or Productive Citizenship classes.

The Department of Correctional Education maintains waiting lists for all of its academic and vocational classes in the adult correctional centers. Students age 65 or older must serve on DCE

academic and vocational waiting lists. At this time, there are no special privileges granted to seniors in regards to the DCE waiting list.

Programs Designed for Seniors

The Department of Correctional Education does not have specific programs or classes designed for seniors.

Publications and Websites for Seniors

DCE does not provide “consumer-oriented” publications for our seniors aged 65 or older. We do provide the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) in large print as well as the GED. Large print publications are available in most of our prison libraries. We will also determine if providing books on tape is an option in our libraries. At this time, student inmates in adult correctional centers have no access to the internet.

Future Programs for Seniors

In 2007, 600 beds were added to the Deerfield Correctional Center. This correctional center is specifically designed for geriatric and assisted living inmates. Because of the potential for more students at this facility, DCE created 3 teaching positions to be filled at Deerfield CC. An Adult Basic Education teaching position was filled in August. A Transition Specialist position was filled in March. DCE is currently in the process of recruiting for a Horticulture Instructor position for this school as well.

Our senior students are still in need of educational programs that help with independent living and that offer therapeutic recreational activities. DCE will continue to offer large print books in our libraries and we hope to one day offer our students books on tape. All of these things will aid us in providing better educational opportunities for the seniors we serve.

The Agency Workforce Plan

Agency and Statewide data was obtained from the Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM). The data included classified employees only and percentages are based on a classified agency count of 666 employees.

The mean age of employees within the Department of Correctional Education is 49, which compares with the mean age statewide of 45. The largest number of our employees can be found in the age group of 55 to 60 years old with 21.6%. 13.9% of the statewide workforce can be found in the same age group. 55.2% of the DCE workforce is over age 50, compared with 40.3% in the statewide workforce.

DCE has a large number of employees over the age of 50. A total of at least 54 current employees are eligible for unreduced retirement in 2007 according to DHRM data. The following areas are most vulnerable to possible retirements in the next several years.

Training and Instruction: At least 30 employees are eligible currently or will be during 2007, 8 additional in 2008, 10 additional in 2009, and 14 additional in 2010.

Education Administration: At least 14 employees are eligible currently or will be during 2007, 2 additional in 2008, 2 additional in 2009, and 4 additional in 2010.

In light of the number of possible retirements in the next few years, DCE has developed several strategies to improve teacher recruitment and retention, including a priority on seeking parity for instructional staff compensation, developing innovative recruitment methods, offering a Summer College Internship Program and reviving the Principal Internship Program. The need for knowledgeable and informed managers is an ongoing issue. Training opportunities for managers will increase with the Commonwealth's MVP (Managing Virginia Program) management training program. This new management training program will serve as a valuable asset as we look to promote and/or hire new managers in the future.

It is possible that the upcoming retirements may provide minimal cost savings to the agency but there is a bigger chance that the cost to replace our retirees will end up costing us more. DCE is committed to recruiting and retaining highly qualified educational leaders so we will continue to offer and provide our employees with highly competitive salaries and ongoing professional development.

Additional Services or Programs

In the future, DCE would like to be able to provide therapeutic recreational programs for our seniors.