

**THE DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION**

**AUDIT FINAL PLAN**

**Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention**

**April, 2004**

## INTRODUCTION

Legislation requires that the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention develop and implement a plan to address the findings and recommendations in the *Performance Audit of Youth Development Centers and Juvenile Detention Centers from the Office of the State Auditor* which was released by the State Auditor in May, 2003. The plan is to “include proposed changes in organization and management, policies and procedures, and programs in order to address problems identified in the report.” The plan is also to “identify and document any funding needs for consideration by the 2004 Regular Session of the 2003 General Assembly.” This report addresses the requirement that the Department “shall report on the final plan” for addressing the audit’s findings and recommendations. Before discussion of the final plan, a review of the initial action and plan as well as initial steps taken, reported to the General Assembly in November, 2003, will be presented.

## INITIAL ACTION AND PLAN: A REVIEW

Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Secretary George L. Sweat convened a meeting of Department management from across the State upon release of the audit report. Secretary Sweat reviewed the audit report’s findings and recommendations and emphasized the Department’s commitment to addressing the issues raised by the audit. The areas of major emphasis in the report (safety and security; education and treatment; staffing and training; and management systems) were identified as action areas to address across the Department’s organizational structure.

Secretary Sweat assigned responsibility for addressing the audit’s 36 recommendations to specific Department staff and named a project manager (Department’s Chief of Staff) to track the Department’s audit response. As part of this tracking, each recommendation in the audit was further defined in terms of tasks, activities, lead responsibilities, staff, and schedule.

An initial follow up regarding progress on each recommendation was undertaken in July, 2003, and additional follow ups were conducted at the end of 2003 and in March, 2004. Each of these follow ups was structured with the audit’s four areas of emphasis.

## INITIAL STEPS: AN UPDATE

As required in legislation, the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention took several initial steps in the areas of organization and management, policies and procedures, and programs to address problems identified in the audit report. The following offers an update on the initial steps which were taken by the Department.

**Organization and Management:** An organization chart for the Department reflects the following information regarding organization and management (see Attachment A).

- **Restructuring of management for better communication and coordination:** Per designation in Department policy, an executive management team consisting of the

Secretary, Deputy Secretary, three Assistant Secretaries, Human Resources Director, and Center for the Prevention of School Violence Director manages and provides leadership over the entire Department. An expanded management team of Department managers and supervisors works with the executive management team to ensure that communication within the Department occurs and to enhance coordination of Department efforts. Initially comprised of eleven managers and supervisors after the audit report's release, this expanded team now includes the Department's area administrators who are stationed in the field.

- **Moving Intervention / Prevention and Youth Development Divisions to the Office of the Deputy Secretary:** To draw the divisions of Intervention / Prevention and Youth Development closer together philosophically and operationally, they have been moved to the Office of the Deputy Secretary. The Department views this move as the next logical phase of juvenile justice reform which was started in 1999.
- **Moving education and treatment to the Office of the Deputy Secretary:** To enhance the coordination of education and treatment programming and to expand them across the Department, education and treatment have been placed under the direction of the Deputy Secretary.
- **Identifying additional responsibilities for Assistant Secretary of Administration:** The Assistant Secretary for Administration's role now includes responsibilities in the areas of professional standards (internal audit, investigations, complaint resolution), services as youth and family liaison, information services, and volunteerism. These are in addition to responsibilities for policy, safety and emergency management, and legislative relations.
- **Naming a Chief of Staff for the Department with specific responsibilities:** The role of Chief of Staff has been defined with responsibilities in the areas of organization and management, performance procedures and outcomes, relationships with other departments and agencies, staff to boards and councils such as the State Advisory Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and oversight of communications, grants, and the Center for the Prevention of School Violence. The director of the Center for the Prevention of School Violence has transitioned into the role of Chief of Staff.

**Policies and Procedures:** Significant efforts developing policies and procedures have been put forth throughout the Department since the audit report's release.

- **Implementing a written policy approval process which creates a system for consideration and approval of all policies in the Department.** The existence of this system affords the Department the ability to streamline approval of the many needed policies which were noted in the audit report. As of April 1, 2004, Secretary Sweat has signed 126 policies. Additionally, 278 policies are being processed through the written policy approval process.

- **Prioritizing the development and approval of safety and health, security, and treatment policies to address the most critical need policy areas.** Policies are being developed throughout the Department, but the policies that are being processed first through the written policy system are those that involve the areas of safety and health, security, and treatment.

**Programs:** Programming issues raised by the audit are being addressed both internally and externally.

- **Synthesizing treatment and education and expanding treatment and education programming horizontally across Department:** In addition to the movement of treatment and education to the Office of the Deputy Secretary, a better coordination of treatment and education services in the Department's facilities and across the Department's organizational structure is taking place. The intent is to better meet both the treatment and education needs of the youth who encounter North Carolina's juvenile justice system.
- **Collaborating with Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) on treatment programming:** Secretary George Sweat and Secretary Carmen Hooker Odom have met several times since the audit's release. Initial focus was upon the delineation of assurances (see Attachment B) by DHHS to the Department. Staffs of the departments are also collaborating on operationalizing the Child Mental Health Plan, inclusion of language regarding the juvenile justice system in local management entity contracts, sharing of data about youth in the juvenile justice system, exploration of Medicaid funding, piloting the implementation of the Child Mental Health Plan for juvenile justice, and a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation project involving technical assistance to both departments so that gaps can be identified and assessed and consistent definitions and processes can be developed. Additional collaboration is occurring on a National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice policy academy directed at improving services for youth with mental health and co-occurring substance use disorders.
- **Collaborating with the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) on education programming:** Meetings between upper level managers in the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and Department of Public Instruction have taken place. Specific points made in the audit report were addressed in these meetings. Recent meetings of the State Board of Education have resulted in an articulation that more collaboration between education and juvenile justice needs to occur with regard to the impact of dropouts, suspensions, and expulsions on the juvenile justice system. This collaboration is being pursued at the highest levels of management at this time.
- **Assessing staff development needs and provision:** The Department is currently reviewing its staff development offerings. Training priorities and strategies are being developed by management as is a database for tracking training which is mentioned in the audit report.

## FINAL PLAN

The Department's final plan for addressing the audit involves efforts that can be framed with the four major areas of emphasis delineated in the State Auditor's report: safety and security; education and treatment; staffing and training; and management systems. The plan is both short term and long term in orientation with "short term" defined as the timeframe between the present and the opening of new facilities and "long term" marked by the opening of facilities and their operation into the future.

The safety and security efforts over the short term include repairs and renovations to existing facilities. A prioritized list of these repairs and renovations has been developed with priority designations based upon concerns about the safety of youth and staff as well as concerns about maintaining the security of these facilities. The cost of these repairs and renovations has been estimated at \$6 million (see Attachment C).

The long-term plan for addressing safety and security involves, as recommended by the State Auditor, the building of facilities with replacement beds. The Department has developed a recommendation for these facilities which includes the closing of four of the current Youth Development Centers. As pointed out in the audit, these buildings are old and outdated in terms of current needs. The Department's plan calls for the closure of current buildings at Swannanoa, Jackson, Samarkand, and Dobbs with the opening of smaller facilities at Swannanoa, Jackson, and Samarkand and the opening of a smaller facility near the current Dobbs location. An additional nine small facilities are also being recommended by the Department.

The short-term plan for repairs and renovations with its prioritization of safety and security takes into account that current facilities will no longer be used when new facilities are opened. Approximately 50 percent of the repairs and renovations are at Dillon Youth Development Center which will remain open. The other 50 percent are deemed necessary to maintain the safety and security of youth and staff until the new facilities open.

The short-term plan for education and treatment is well underway with the education and treatment sections of the Department working more closely together under the guidance of the Deputy Secretary. The assessment process which committed youth undergo has been studied and is being adjusted to build upon its early success which was noted in the audit report. Weekly meetings are held involving education and treatment staff and discussions are ongoing with regard to the broadening of the blending of education and treatment efforts across the Department's comprehensive strategy framework. The policies developed for education and treatment reflect contributions from both disciplines.

The long-term plan for education and treatment is best understood through description of the Department's new approach to direct care staffing. This new approach, a foundation of the Department's recommendation for facility replacement, involves the establishment of "youth counselor" positions. These direct care positions, apportioned at a 1-to-8 staff to youth ratio, will be responsible for ensuring that the care which committed youth receive addresses their education and treatment needs. Working closely with education and treatment staff, the youth

counselors will essentially be by the coordinators of the delivery of these services and will reinforce the efforts put forth by education and treatment staff. A holistic view of the youth will define how education and treatment as well as other services are blended and delivered with the intent for the youth to leave the juvenile justice system and not return to it or enter into the adult system.

As treated in the audit report, staffing and training concerns ranged from recruitment to training to staffing ratios. In the short term, the Department, with a refined recruiting message and methodology, is targeting the type of employee for hiring who brings the education, experience, knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to work with youth with a therapeutic rather than correctional mindset. These short-term efforts will feed into the long-term plan for the type of staff needed in the facilities being recommended by the Department.

The training concerns in the audit report are being addressed in the short term with more training classes being offered this year to ensure that staff are trained in a timely manner. These additional offerings will continue in coming years. Content of the training is being examined and modified to train staff so that they will be able to transition from the correctional approach to the therapeutic one. The therapeutic HEART (Holistic Enrichment for At-Risk Teens) program at Samarkand, coupled with evidenced-based practices from other successful programs, offers the Department a model on which to build transitional training modules. In the short term, the Department is working to expand the therapeutic elements of the HEART program, which now services twelve to sixteen females at a time, to the entire Samarkand campus, making it the type of therapeutic facility that the Department intends to replicate in the facilities that will open in the long term.

The ratios for direct care staffing have been studied by the Department as well as by the juvenile justice consultant to O'Brien / Atkins, the Department's architectural contractor. The short-term plan for addressing an improvement in staffing involves staffing and scheduling adjustments to best meet the needs of the youth. The long-term plan is to operationalize and implement a 1-to-8 direct care staffing ratio in the facilities recommended by the Department.

The management systems emphasis in the audit report directed the Department to completely develop its policies, ensure policy compliance, and continue the development of NC-JOIN (North Carolina's Juvenile On-Line Information Network). The short-term plan regarding policies and policy compliance involves the continued processing of the 278 policies currently in the written policy system. Policy compliance is addressed by the policy system as training plans are required to accompany policies. These efforts will continue into the future to set into place appropriate and effective policies in the Department's future facilities.

The development of NC-JOIN in the short term focuses on the completion of phases three, four, and five. Approximately \$3 million is needed to pay for staff and equipment to implement these phases over the time period of July 2004 through June 2006. The Department has requested \$300,000 in funding in its expansion budget request for the next phase as well as for the management information infrastructure. Other funding sources continue to be explored for both system development as well as maintenance in the long term.

The Department, in addition to the already described efforts, will be pursuing other efforts which are intended to meet the concerns brought forth by the audit report. Two of these efforts require short-term attention but offer long-term benefit. The first of these involves the initiation of technical assistance from the Center for Research and Professional Development which is part of the National Juvenile Detention Association. This technical assistance will begin in May and will focus on furthering the Department's "jurisdictional planning" efforts. The intent of this assistance is to help with the development of the community connectedness envisioned by the Department in North Carolina's juvenile justice future.

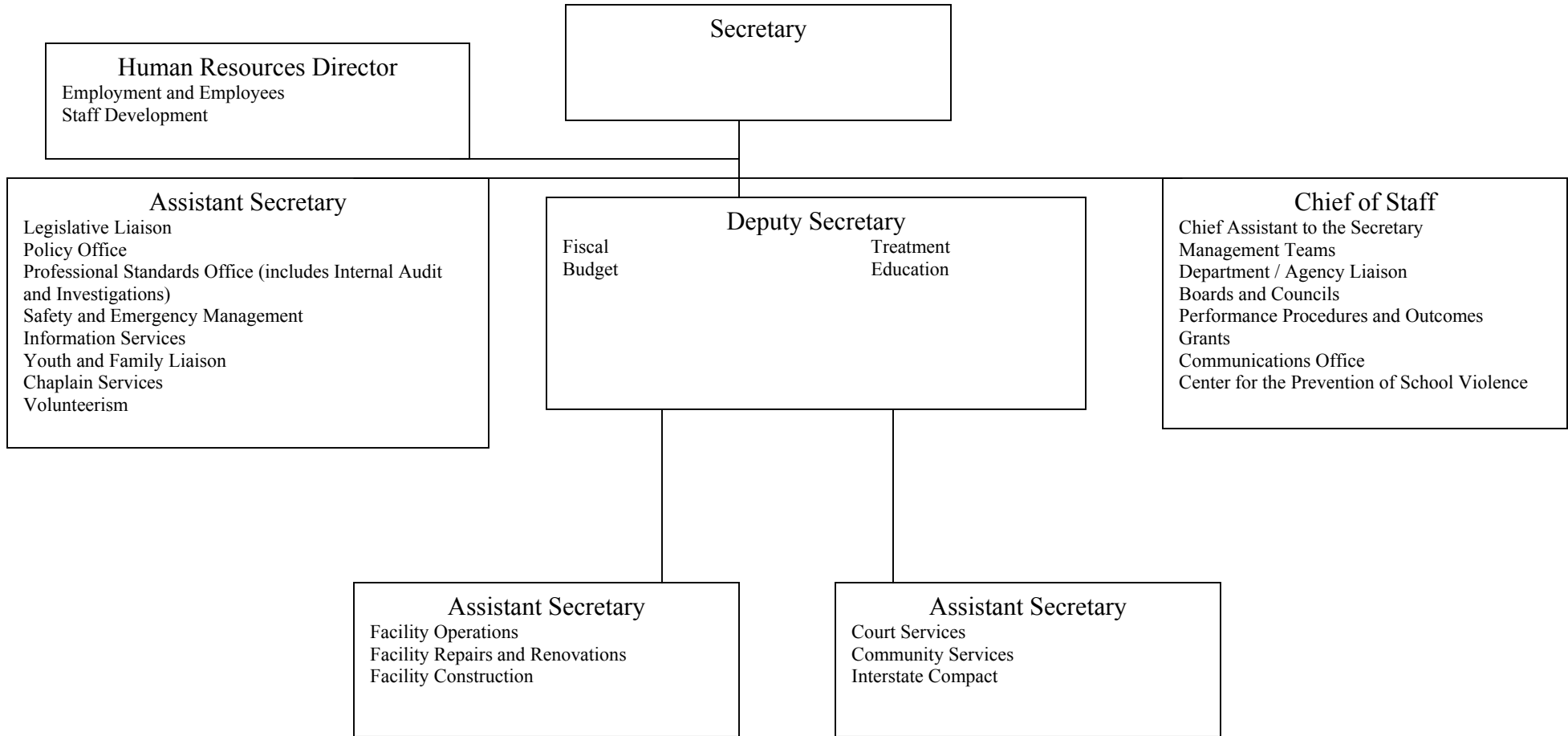
The second of these involves implementation of the Performance-based Standards (PbS) put forth by the Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators (CJCA). These standards set in place performance goals, standards, and outcomes in the areas of safety, order, security, health and mental health, programming, justice, and reintegration. The Department has just been informed that it has been accepted by CJCA as a state project and will be establishing the procedures and putting into place the instruments associated with PbS. In the long-term, PbS will enable quality control of and continuous process improvement in the Department's facility operations.

The "price tag" for the short-term and long-term plans of the Department includes costs associated with repairs and renovations (\$6.1 million), the facilities plan (\$79.7 million), staffing and training (\$979,780) and NC-JOIN costs (\$3 million).

## **CONCLUSION**

The Department approached the *Performance Audit of Youth Development Centers and Juvenile Detention Centers from the Office of the State Auditor* as an opportunity to address the inadequacies and shortcomings of the existing system. Many of these inadequacies and shortcomings were rooted in a history of inadequate system development. The Department approached the year following the audit's release with actions targeting the specific concerns highlighted in the audit report but also with a focus on the larger landscape of juvenile justice in the State. The Department continues development of a comprehensive strategy (see Attachment D) for juvenile justice which sets the framework in which many of the efforts described in this final plan can be placed. But the Department is also doing much more than what is described in this report as it touches the lives of 100,000 youth and their families annually in an effort to promote public safety and juvenile delinquency prevention, intervention, and treatment through the operation of a seamless, comprehensive juvenile justice system.

**DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION**





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Michael F. Easley, Governor

Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

November 13, 2003

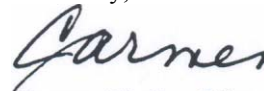
Dear Secretary Sweat:

Given what we have learned from our recent meetings and our shared commitment to ensure the availability of appropriate services for youth who are most at-risk and have the highest needs in our state, I am offering the following assurances on behalf of the Department of Health and Human Services:

- the Department of Health and Human Services recognizes that the youth committed to the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention facilities pose public safety challenges that must be addressed;
- DHHS supports DJJDP's delivery of mental health services to committed youth in its facilities and DHHS will collaborate with DJJDP to ensure that the needs of these youth are met;
- DHHS and DJJDP will collaborate on policy and training initiatives;
- DHHS and DJJDP will work together to draw down appropriate Medicaid funding for youth who are at the greatest risk of entering the juvenile justice system, those in the system, and those transitioning from DJJDP facilities to the community;
- DHHS and DJJDP will work on projects that maximize funding streams for youth who are at the greatest risk of entering the juvenile justice system, those in the system, and those transitioning from DJJDP facilities to the community;
- DHHS and DJJDP will collaborate to develop standardized instruments, assessments, and protocols for working together with youth in North Carolina's communities; and
- DHHS personnel will work with DJJDP personnel to provide appropriate placement and treatment for youth that require residential services.

Thank you for the work your Department does on behalf of children and families in North Carolina.

Sincerely,

  
Carmen Hooker Odom

## Department of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention 2004 Summary of Priority Repair and Renovation Projects

PRIORITY	FACILITY	PROJECT NAME	TOTAL
1	Swannanoa Valley YDC	Fire Detection/Alarm System & Support Structure	647,800
2	Samarkand	Gymnasium Roof Replacement & Bat Removal	232,500
3	New Hanover	Renovate Fire Alarm System	168,000
4	Dobbs	Replace Htg. System at Reid Cottage & A/C for Admin., Reid, Gym & School	1,075,200
5	Stonewall	Upgrade Lift Station	143,000
6	New Hanover	Replace Roof and Repair Building Exterior	466,000
7	Dillon	Generator for Cafeteria & Acad. Sch.; Pri. Dist. Cable; Replace 4 Transf.	266,200
8	Swannanoa Valley	Upgrade 112 Medium Security Doors for Student Rms. In Cottages	215,600
9	Dillon	Replace Interior & Exit Doors in A, B & D Housing Units	80,900
10	Youth Dev. Centers	Youth Development Centers Security Cameras	550,000
11	Swannanoa Valley	Harden Ceilings in A & C Wings, Greenwood Hallways	70,400
12	Dillon	New Boiler for D Housing Unit, School & HVAC for Acad. Sch. Bldg.	662,000
13	Dillon	Harden Student Rooms in A, B, D, and E Cottages	55,000
14	Dillon	Upgrade Security Lighting & Replace Outside Lighting	513,200
15	Dillon	Replace Security Windows in Admin. & Academic School	100,600
16	Dillon	Redo Hot Water Circulation System in A, B & D	33,000
17	Dillon	Replace Interior Ceiling Tile and Lights in Academic School	10,500
18	Group Homes	Multi-Purpose Group Home Structure Repairs	149,600
19	Dillon	Replace Windows and Security Screens in A & B Cottage	79,400
20	Pitt	Replace Roof	123,700
21	Detention Centers	Detention Centers Security Cameras	220,000
22	Dillon	Replace Plumbing and Re-tile Showers for A, B & D Cottages	130,800
23	Dillon	Replace Tile Floor in Gym and Cottage D	21,000
24	Dillon	Renovate Reception Area	16,500
25	Dillon	Add Clinical Office Space Within Cottages A & B	110,000
<b>Estimate Total</b>			<b>\$6,140,900</b>

## NORTH CAROLINA'S COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Prevention</li> <li>•Target Population: Youth at Risk</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Graduated Sanctions</li> <li>•Target Population: Delinquent Youth</li> </ul>		
⇒Programs for all Youth	⇒Programs for youth at Greatest Risk	⇒Immediate Intervention	⇒Community Confinement	⇒YDC (Youth Development Center)	⇒Post Release
<p><u>Youth Development Goals</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy and nurturing families</li> <li>• Safe Communities</li> <li>• School attachment</li> <li>• Prosocial peer relations</li> <li>• Personal development and life skills</li> <li>• Healthy lifestyle choices</li> </ul>			<p><u>Youth Habilitation Goals</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy family participation</li> <li>• Community reintegration</li> <li>• Educational success and skills development</li> <li>• Healthy peer network development</li> <li>• Prosocial values development</li> <li>• Healthy lifestyle choices</li> </ul>		