



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Washington, D.C. 20531

December 8, 2014

Dear Colleague:

It is with great pleasure that I share with you the newly released [Correctional Education Guidance Package \(guidance package\)](#). This guidance package was developed through a partnership between the U.S. Departments of Justice (DOJ) and Education (ED) to strengthen educational services for youth who come into contact with our juvenile justice systems.

This is a significant step toward our collective vision of a juvenile justice system that promotes positive educational outcomes for all system-involved youth, enhances their academic and social-emotional skill sets, lessens the likelihood of youth reentering the justice system, and increases their chances of success in life.

To help communities and practitioners develop a set of overarching characteristics for providing high-quality educational services for system-involved youth, this guidance package:

- Identifies five recommended principles for improving education in juvenile justice secure care facilities along with supportive core activities for consideration by agencies and facilities seeking to improve existing practices or implement new ones;
- Provides legal guidance on civil rights obligations to youth in the juvenile justice system, and on federal laws guaranteeing the right of youth with disabilities to receive special education and related services; and
- Clarifies that young people in secure care settings may be eligible for Pell grants to help them continue their education.

We know that quality education is an essential protective factor for system-involved youth and can help prevent future delinquency and crime. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) supported the development of the recently released [School Discipline Consensus Report](#), a comprehensive roadmap for school discipline reform that includes guidance for recruiting highly qualified teachers to work in juvenile correctional facilities, setting up an effective instructional environment for youth in out of home placements, and ensuring quality, consistency, and transparency of education inside facilities. The guidance package we are releasing today directly aligns with the consensus report's field-driven recommendations to improve conditions for learning for all students and educators.

As part of this guidance package release, our office is strengthening its commitment to meet the educational needs of system-involved youth by developing resources and practical knowledge products that will assist you in your efforts to provide quality education and enable these youth

to set realistic long-term goals, including a successful return to school and community upon release.

Thank you for your dedication and devotion to creating safe, supportive and engaging learning environments and supporting positive, long-term educational, social-emotional, and behavioral health outcomes for all of our students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials 'RL' or a stylized 'R' and 'L'.

Robert L. Listenbee
Administrator
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention