

EL DORADO COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council Members

FROM: Brian J. Richart, Chief Probation Officer

DATE: March 10, 2016

RE: Community Alliance to Reduce Truancy (CART) Program

By receipt of this memorandum, you are being identified as a member of the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC). The JJCC is being reconvened as required by statute in the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA) of 2000.

History

The JJCPA enables California counties to receive funding, through the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC), for juvenile justice programs. On October 26, 2000, your council was established and approved the recommendation of the Probation Officer to implement the Community Alliance to Reduce Truancy (CART) Program. On March 26, 2001, upon receipt of the first allocation of funding from BSCC, the CART Program became operational. Each year since 2001, your council has reconvened and supported the continuation of the CART Program.

Current Status

During the last program year, the CART Program continued with no substantive changes to program goals. There continues to be one Supervising Deputy Probation Officer that oversees the program and a Senior Deputy Probation Officer (part-time) and four Deputy Probation Officers assigned to supervise juvenile offenders and act as a resource at ten El Dorado County high schools. Deputy Probation Officers providing services at each of the schools continue to be a part of the campus culture, developing alliances and partnerships with students and their parents, teachers, school administrators, law enforcement, and the community. Our schools value the presence of a Deputy Probation Officer on their respective campuses and are hopeful the partnership that has developed over the last fourteen years continues.

Results

The JJCPA legislation identified specific outcome areas to be measured and required reports on these measurements to be provided annually to BSCC and the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors (BOS). BSCC created an internet-based system for these annual reports. The eight outcome areas to be measured in the CART Program include attendance and grades at school, payment of restitution and fines, completion of community service work, completion of probation, rate of arrest and incarceration, and rate of violations of probation. Since the inception of the CART Program, all annual reports have been approved by BSCC and the BOS.

In the last program year, seven outcomes were either met or exceeded. Significant results include:

- 30 fewer youth were supervised; however, 53 more youth were handled informally
- 10% less probation violations by youth
- 24% more youth completed probation successfully
- Higher rate of those youth paying restitution to victims
- 12% more youth completed community service requirements
- No significant difference in GPA by youth, or youth getting arrested
- Significantly lower percent of unexcused absences: 5.7% vs. 14.5% in 2014-2015

One goal - the rate of incarceration - was not met. In 2013-2014, 9.9% of youth were incarcerated; in the last program year, 12.1% of youth were incarcerated. As there were significantly less youth supervised, it is believed the number of youth committed to a juvenile detention facility impacted incarceration rates and the measurement of this outcome.

Overall, the data supports the CART program's success in reducing truancy, restoring victims, assisting minors to complete probation successfully and reducing delinquency in the community.

Evaluation

After the last convening of the JJCC in March of 2015, a modification was made to expand services to all students who are in a seat based school program, regardless of the school each attends. It is believed this expansion of services has assisted in the positive direction of our outcomes. The services and actions of the Deputy Probation Officers assigned to the CART Program schools have continued to assist juvenile offenders with improving school attendance, school behavior, and academic performance. The CART Program identifies appropriate services for youth and their families, holds youth accountable to their conditions of probation, and continually strives to deter future delinquent activity. The CART Program also continues to assist in establishing and maintaining collaborative alliances with the school and community to assess and provide appropriate services for families and "at-risk" youth who are not under probation supervision, providing safer schools and neighborhoods throughout El Dorado County.

Recommendation

Due to the continued success of the CART Program as indicated above, it is recommended the CART Program continue at the level supported by available funding.