

DYS COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP REPORT

A System-Wide Approach for Providing High Quality Education to DYS Clients

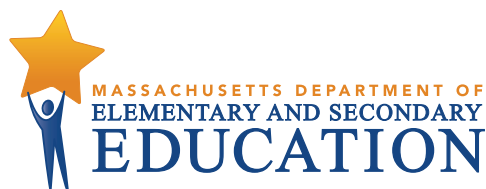
FISCAL YEAR 2020



Massachusetts Department of Youth Services

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Special Education in Institutional Settings





Front Cover: *Justice*

This painting was made possible through the DYS Arts Initiative, a collaboration of the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services, Commonwealth Corporation, and the Collaborative for Educational Services. It was commissioned by Suffolk County District Attorney, Rachel Rollins, and created by a young man from the South East region.

Inside Cover: *Lady Justice (Seer)*

This artwork was the winning submission of an interstate Clash of the Heroes contest sponsored by the National Center on Improving Literacy.

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A SYSTEM-WIDE APPROACH FOR PROVIDING HIGH-QUALITY AND EFFECTIVE EDUCATION TO DYS CLIENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Beginning in 2003, the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services (DYS) undertook unprecedented reforms of its educational programming. This continuous improvement process, referred to as the “Education Initiative,” has created access to high-quality secondary and post-secondary education, career exploration, and workforce development opportunities for youth in the care and custody of DHS.

This report reflects the breadth and depth of the educational programming available through DHS’ contract with the Commonwealth Corporation (CommCorp) and its subcontractor, the Collaborative for Educational Services (CES). Moreover, it reveals how the services funded through this contract positioned the agency to respond swiftly and effectively to the potential disruptive and deleterious effects of the COVID-19 pandemic to the academic development of youth in our care.

We recognize education as one of the most important and impactful program activities DHS provides. Youth who achieve academically, socially, and emotionally are more likely to succeed in realizing their fullest potential and be productive members of their community. At DHS, we are uniquely positioned to support and guide our youth in that process.

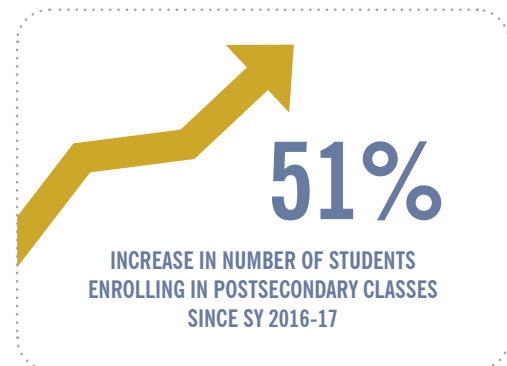
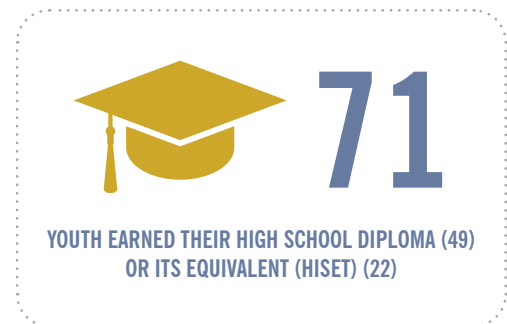
Each year, many of our youth overcome individual and systemic barriers to learning and attain their high school diplomas or equivalent (HiSET®), complete meaningful training programs, participate in dual enrollment, postsecondary college or training courses, earn industry recognized credentials, and achieve other milestones on their way to successful adult lives. These successes are made possible through the hard work and collaboration of many caring adults including parents, guardians, teachers, education and career counselors, juvenile justice youth development specialists, clinicians, administrative officers, caseworkers, program directors, district managers, provider staff, and community support staff.

The DHS education program is organized to support youth progress no matter where they are in their academic journey. The school year is scheduled for 180 days and 5.5 hours of daily structured learning time. The summer school program is scheduled for 30 days and 4.5 hours of daily structured learning time. For youth who are still in high school, their studies are aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and guided by Instructional Guides in the core content areas of English Language Arts, Social Studies, Math, and Science. Additionally, these youth, together with their peers who have already attained their high school attainment, are increasingly participating in a growing portfolio of college classes as part of their scholarly pursuits and continuing these

studies upon their return to the community. We have also increased access to a greater number of applied learning opportunities to make learning more engaging and relevant to the career interests of youth. These exploratory enrichment learning opportunities include experiences in carpentry, horticulture, coding, arts, poetry, 3-D printing, video and music production, telecommunications, home audio communications, copper wiring, small-engine repair, silk screening, culinary arts, virtual driver's education, and other areas of interest. These exploratory activities are critically important as youth grow to allow them to find healthy interests and outlets. Through the different avenues of exploration and expression, DYS educational programming enables youth to discover their hidden talents, creative and intellectual assets, and cultivate their strengths.

Some highlights from this past year:

- Among the 46 youth who increased their grade level equivalent score between their pre and posttest on the General Assessment of Instructional Need (GAIN), we saw improvement by nearly 2 years in the grade level equivalency score in both English and Math over the course of six months
- 52 dual-enrolled and matriculated students took 121 college courses
- 91 Industry Recognized Credentials were earned in such areas as CPR, First Aid, ServSafe, and OSHA
 - 45 youth earned a CPR: Adult, Infant, Child and First Aid Certification
 - 26 youth earned a CareerSafe OSHA 10: General Industry, Construction Industry Certification
 - 8 youth earned ServSafe Food Handler Certification
 - 7 youth earned a ServSafe Food Manager Certification
 - 3 youth earned a American Screen-Printing Association Certified Screen Printer (ASPA) Certification
 - 1 youth earned an ISSA Personal Trainer Certification
 - 1 youth earned C-Tech Telecommunication Certification
- 108 youth enrolled in Leadership, Employment, and Advocacy Development (LEAD), an initiative that supports positive youth development through community engagement, work readiness opportunities, and employment activities, and of these:
 - 67 youth received an internship alone
 - 23 youth received an internship and market employment
 - 18 youth received market employment without an internship



The achievements described throughout this report are a testament to the Department's collaboration with its education partners, the education staff employed by the Collaborative for Educational Services (CES) at DYS, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and CommCorp (the fiscal agent and workforce development partner). These partners provide the multifaceted support and strategic thinking for innovative teaching and learning in DYS residential programs and the educational and workforce development services for DYS youth residing in the community. This is the approach taken to meet the DYS Strategic Plan goal of helping youth sustain the gains they have made while in a DYS program when they return to their communities.

This report provides an overview of the many accomplishments and positive outcomes resulting from the specific efforts DYS undertook, in collaboration with CommCorp, and CES, in SY 2019-2020. It highlights the impact of the following key initiatives which provided a range of education and workforce learning opportunities for juvenile justice involved youth:

- Engaging Teaching and Learning Through High-Quality Professional Development
- Student Performance Data
- Postsecondary Programming
- Technology Infrastructure
- Special Education
- Transition System
- The LEAD Initiative
- College and Career Readiness: Empower Your Future
- Residential Work Programs
- The DYS Arts Initiative
- Family and/or Community Engagement

I. ENGAGING TEACHING AND LEARNING THROUGH HIGH-QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THREE CORE COMPONENTS TO TEACHING AND LEARNING

1

Access for All

DYS strives to ensure that all youth have access to a high-quality education. Providing effective access to the general education curriculum for ALL students requires a multi-faceted approach that includes planning instruction using Universal Design for Learning principles, differentiation, culturally responsive practices, and collaboration with other educators. Towards this end, we have implemented a collaborative planning process with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Special Education in Institutional Settings (SEIS), Literacy, and ESL teachers to reduce barriers to learning, leverage the expertise of the teaching team, and ensure youth are successful in accessing the general education curriculum.

The collaborative planning process uses a formal data driven discussion protocol and is a responsibility shared by general education and special education educators alike. Moreover, it serves to advance our commitment to blended learning and differentiation. Blended learning provides youth with access to the curriculum while also allowing for educators to personalize learning experiences based on their knowledge of youths' social and cultural identities and their lived experiences. Differentiation is a framework or philosophy for effective teaching that involves providing all students within their diverse classroom community of learners a range of different avenues for understanding new information

2

Personalization

The DYS youth in residential programs range in age, grade level, high school attainment acquisition, academic and career readiness, cultural background, and interests. Because of this, DYS embraces a personalized approach to education where educators and other caring adults help youth assess their strengths and aspirations, plan for and make demonstrated progress toward their own goals and work cooperatively with others to accomplish challenging and engaging tasks. The process provides youth with opportunities to think about and plan for their futures through curricula, self-assessments, courses, and conversations with their teachers and other caring adults. These efforts are guided by information about youth drawn from a range of sources including academic and career assessments, school records, formative assessments, and individual conversations.

3

Curriculum and Instruction

All curricula are grounded in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks which are aligned with the Common Core State Standards. Teachers use research-based and culturally relevant high impact instructional strategies that are rigorous, grade-level appropriate, and relevant. Instruction is regularly evaluated by qualified educational administrators, informed by the MA DESE model evaluation system, and professional development is organized to support teacher proficiency in these standards and in advancing the goals of the Department.

A. OVERVIEW OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION IN DYS

The DYS core curricula support students in pursuing their educational goals whether they are working toward a high school diploma or its equivalency (HiSET®/GED®), enrolled in college courses, or preparing to enter the workforce. Youth have access to resources designed to expose them to rigorous content. Teachers personalize instruction using research-based principles of Understanding by Design (“UbD”) and Universal Design for Learning (“UDL”).

Lessons are aligned with the most current Massachusetts State Curriculum Frameworks. Foundational instructional guides support teachers’ planning in each core content area: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and History. Teachers use these guides to craft engaging and culturally responsive units and lessons personalized to meet the needs of each learner. This year marks the completion of a two-year effort to align the original DYS History Guide with the 2018 Massachusetts History and Social Science Frameworks. The new DYS History Guide now spans US History I and II and World History I and II. The Guide’s instructional units feature strong connections between content knowledge and skills needed for college and career readiness.

To support content instruction, DYS maintains an official DYS Program of Studies that guides the selection and provision of classes available to students and ensures credit recovery or attainment for high school students returning to their home districts. The menu of study options offers opportunities for differentiated instruction, technology integration, and blended learning. Youth can access computer and web-based courses. Youth can work toward success on Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). HiSET®/GED®, and the use of the ACCUPLACER® College Placement Test helps to determine a youth’s readiness for college level coursework. Youth can also work towards completing college courses, vocational certifications, and other personalized postsecondary goals.

Consistent with our commitment to personalization, DYS has implemented multiple strategies for actively engaging youth in setting education and career goals and understanding their academic progress. The components of this system, outlined below, include a robust education-welcoming orientation in all residential programs, settings. We believe these strategies have been embodied in teacher-student conferences, youth educational experiences, and academic growth reports. As a result of this set of relationship building activities coupled with academic and goal focused conversations, our youth are participating in college classes at rates we have not seen ever before. Youth are envisioning productive futures and engaging in concrete steps towards their futures that establishes the attainment of a high school diploma or its equivalent as a milestone in their academic lives, and not a finish line.

Welcoming Orientation

Teachers implement an intentional and detailed process to welcome youth into the DYS classroom, build rapport, and learn about a youth’s education and career goals. This orientation meeting informs youth of the importance DYS attaches to education and the range of educational opportunities youth may pursue while in DYS. Also, this meeting provides an intentional and structured opportunity for teachers to assess where students are in their learning and to support them in developing the education goals that they will focus on while in residence.

Student-Teacher Conferences

Using conferencing guidelines adapted from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, teachers draw on the information they learn during their meeting with the youth, at the welcoming orientation, in the classroom, and through conferencing. This process encourages youth reflection and dialogue, links the youth’s progress directly to their academic work, and provides the opportunity for youth to revisit and revise their academic and career readiness goals.

Academic Growth Reports

To provide youth with a clear understanding of their progress, DYS continues to implement a quarterly Academic Growth Report (AGR). The AGR serves as a reference point for discussions between teachers and their students during student-teacher conferences regarding the progress youth are making toward mastering content and career readiness skills and is a platform for youth to set goals for continued growth. Different versions of the AGR template have been designed to align with the different concentrations of study youth may be pursuing, including high school or high school equivalency, post-secondary, and career readiness.

Because DYS places a premium on communication amongst the many adults who support youth in their academic and career readiness success, DYS continues to use a protocol for sharing the AGR at the youths' treatment meetings where students' progress in academic and career readiness skill development are reviewed. These meetings are attended by youth, educators, caseworkers, clinicians, program staff, family members, and other caring adults.

Emphasizing Literacy

Demographic and academic data analysis provides an overview of youth committed to DYS' custody. Approximately 80% are youth of the global majority (non-white), over 14% are English Learners (EL), nearly two-thirds come from just ten urban districts, and about 42% received special education supports for learning disabilities while in DYS. DYS is increasingly serving committed youth at an older age. Most are committed between the ages of 16.5 and 18. (This past year, the average age at first commitment was 16.6, while the median age was 17, with most youth assessed at grade 9 or 10.) Since the spring of 2016, DYS has seen an increase in our EL population, with "newcomers" to this country representing 14.4% of all committed youth. In response to this increase and in accordance with the LOOK Act of 2017, DYS continues to support the professional development of teachers working with this growing population and has leveraged Title I resources to hire English as a Second Language teaching specialists. Culturally responsive practice continues to be a focus in all curriculum development initiatives. With this demographic data in mind and informed by research supporting the value of literacy for positive life outcomes, DYS continues to place a focus on literacy skill development for all youth and across content areas.

Reading

Youth participate in reading classes three times a week. The structure of the reading classes provides independent reading time for youth with the youth engaging in discussions with teachers and peers during class. Youth also maintain a journal of what they thought and how they felt about what they read. This approach, grounded in research, strives to foster a love of reading while strengthening literacy skills. Recognizing that success is predicated on the selection of high interest titles that represent the diversity present in the DYS population, titles were chosen that reflected themes of resilience and humor and supported the students' social emotional well-being during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The titles youth read this past year included:

- *Banging My Head Against the Wall: A Comedy Writer's Guide to Seeing Stars*, a comedy memoir by Seinfeld writer, Andy Cowan,
- *Monstrous: The Lore, Gore, and Science Behind Your Favorite Monsters* by Carlyn Beccia that exposes youth to students explored the real-world origins of eight popular monsters, including Dracula, werewolves, and Godzilla,
- *I Can't Make This Up, Life Lessons* by Kevin Hart: New York Times bestselling author, superstar comedian, and Hollywood box office star, a "hilarious but also heartfelt" (Elle) memoir on survival, success, and the importance of believing in yourself, and
- *"Don't Date Rosa Santos"* by Nina Moreno, a young adult Cuban-American novel with humor, misunderstandings, and romance combined with important themes like family, grief and loss all illustrated through a rich Latinx culture.

Also, in an effort to embed literacy instruction across all programs, DYS has continued the use of Keys to Literacy, a set of strategies that helps youth build comprehension, vocabulary and writing skills, as well as basic skills instruction for youth at the beginning levels of reading. Youth also access LightSail, a digital library that offers high interest fiction and nonfiction reading materials tailored to a youth's reading readiness levels.

Mathematical Literacy

As data reflected later in this report demonstrate, mathematical literacy continues to be a significant academic gap area for many youths placed in DYS. Recognizing that youth need to know how to read and understand the academic language of mathematics in order to use numbers to help solve real-world problems, teachers were provided with professional development that focused on the intersection of mathematics and reading instruction. Through the progression of text dependent questions, teachers learned how to lead students through questions that check for general understanding, and require them to identify key details, learn vocabulary and text structure, consider the author's purpose, and solve and justify answers. Use of this process has enabled teachers to modify a mathematical problem to make it open ended and to tailor the problem to the youths' interests while simultaneously reinforcing reading comprehension and math practices.

We also added ALEKS Math to our curricular resources. ALEKS or "Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces" is a research based, artificially intelligent assessment and learning system that uses adaptive questioning to quickly determine what a youth knows and does not know in content area. ALEKS instructs the youth on the topics they are ready to learn.

History and Civics Literacy

In alignment with DESE's Civics Initiative and the civic education legislation, an "Act to Promote and Enhance Civic Engagement" ([Chapter 296 of the Acts of 2018](#)), DYS worked on combining history instruction with civics engagement. The Rethinking History Civics Steering Committee was established to plan for decolonized history and explicit civics instruction in the DYS classroom. Rethinking History Civics instruction will be more reflective of the positive contributions of the ancestry of our population, namely those of the global majority and indigenous people. All core content Instructional Coaches participated in DESE's Civics Projects Network. All teachers participated in professional development—"Making Civics Matter: Pedagogical Practices that Promote Civic Skills Development in Youth"—where they learned about the connections between civics instruction, the new History and Social Science Frameworks, and the new civics law. As a result of this initiative, our youth will experience a curriculum that elevates stories that affirm our youth, preparing them to be confident, productive citizens in the global society.

We also launched the first statewide DYS "Civics in Action" contest. The goal of the contest was to engage youth in learning about civics by challenging them to present their perspectives on civics and its influence on their lives. Youth were asked to explore:

- What does "community" mean to me?
- What is one need in my community and what are my ideas for solving the problem?
- What is one thing I could do to start the change I wish to see?
- What would my idea look like?
- What would be different in my community if my idea worked and I could solve the problem?

There were 23 entries from ten programs across the state. Examples of youth submissions included community-themed artwork, letters to local elected officials, proposals for community projects that focused on increasing mentorship opportunities for youth in the community, cyberbullying prevention, and a plan for a community clean-up day.

The Brown University's CHOICES Program curriculum was also added as an additional history/civics instructional resource. This curriculum “empowers students to understand the relationship between history and current issues while developing the analytical skills to become thoughtful global citizens.” These “lessons reflect up-to-date historiography and equip students to develop the skills necessary for historical thinking, understanding, and writing.” (Brown University, 2020). The content provides for multiple perspectives on historical events and challenges the dominant ethnocentric narrative. DYS teachers received training in how to effectively implement the curriculum and integrate it into their current history and civics instruction.

Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math (STEM) Literacy

DYS continues to offer curricular resources that are hands-on, build on youth interests, make learning more relevant and support areas of academic learning. These resources allow students to learn STEM concepts using a real-world application while exploring STEM oriented careers in the fields of telecommunications, home communication systems, fiber optics and wiring, and green technology.

Last year, we provided training in the Communication Pathways Series (CPS) by C-Tech with priority given to short-term programs. This series included seven 10-hour learning modules that were incorporated into core STEM instruction or taught as stand-alone lessons. The program also integrated history and ELA disciplines to provide students a cross-curricular experience. The seven CPS programs offered were:

- Telecom Evolution – Provided students with an understanding of telecommunications and how it works.
- Mission: Breakout – Focused on the physical code of telecommunications with regards to configuration and arranging elements in their proper sequence.
- Connectivity Conquest – Taught basic concepts of home communication systems with an emphasis on real world applications.
- Expedition: Fiber – Covered role of light communications, from heliographs to modern fiber optics cable.
- Spectacular Spectrum – Offered activities and experiments involving the science of light, scientific notation, the scientific method, and the science of optics.
- Light Voyagers – Project-based learning activities using light manipulation to measure reflection, dispersion and calculate angles of incidence.
- Green Technology Systems – Offered instruction on environmental responsibilities and Green Technology.

2020 CIVIC ACTION PROJECT WINNERS

First Place and Winner:

Elijah, Teamworks
“Planning a Community Clean Up Day”

Second Place Winners:

Jaiden, Nauset Academy
“Increasing Mentorship Opportunities for
Youth in the Community”

Daleysha, RFK Girls
“Preventing Cyberbullying”

Technology Literacy for Teachers and Students

DYS has been unwavering in promoting teacher and youth use of technology to strengthen teaching and learning. At the start of the academic year, several strategies were identified that would enhance proficiency of educators in blended learning. The Instructional Technology Coaches helped with the professional development session on the use of technology to meet learning objectives. A partnership with the Center for Educational Excellence in Alternative Settings, now known as BreakFree Education, led to a range of creative learning experiences where youth use technology to demonstrate their learning.

In mid-March with the emergency school closures due to COVID-19, DYS made a critical yet nimble shift to remote teaching and learning. Our success in making this instructional pivot was truly a team approach and built on critical infrastructure investments in positions such as the Instructional Technology and Coaching staff and the IT support team; hardware, such as Chromebooks; and extensive daily training in blended learning technologies, e.g. Google Suite. Because youth were generally familiar with Google Classroom and Chromebooks, they were able to quickly adapt to remote learning and teachers were able to design lessons that provided youth with opportunities to demonstrate their learning on-line. As a result, youth experienced minimal disruption in educational services and were able to continue towards attaining their academic goals.

Lorelle Allesio, one of our two Instructional Technology Coaches, shared her reflection on the impact of COVID-19 on job-embedded coaching and our accomplishments this past spring:

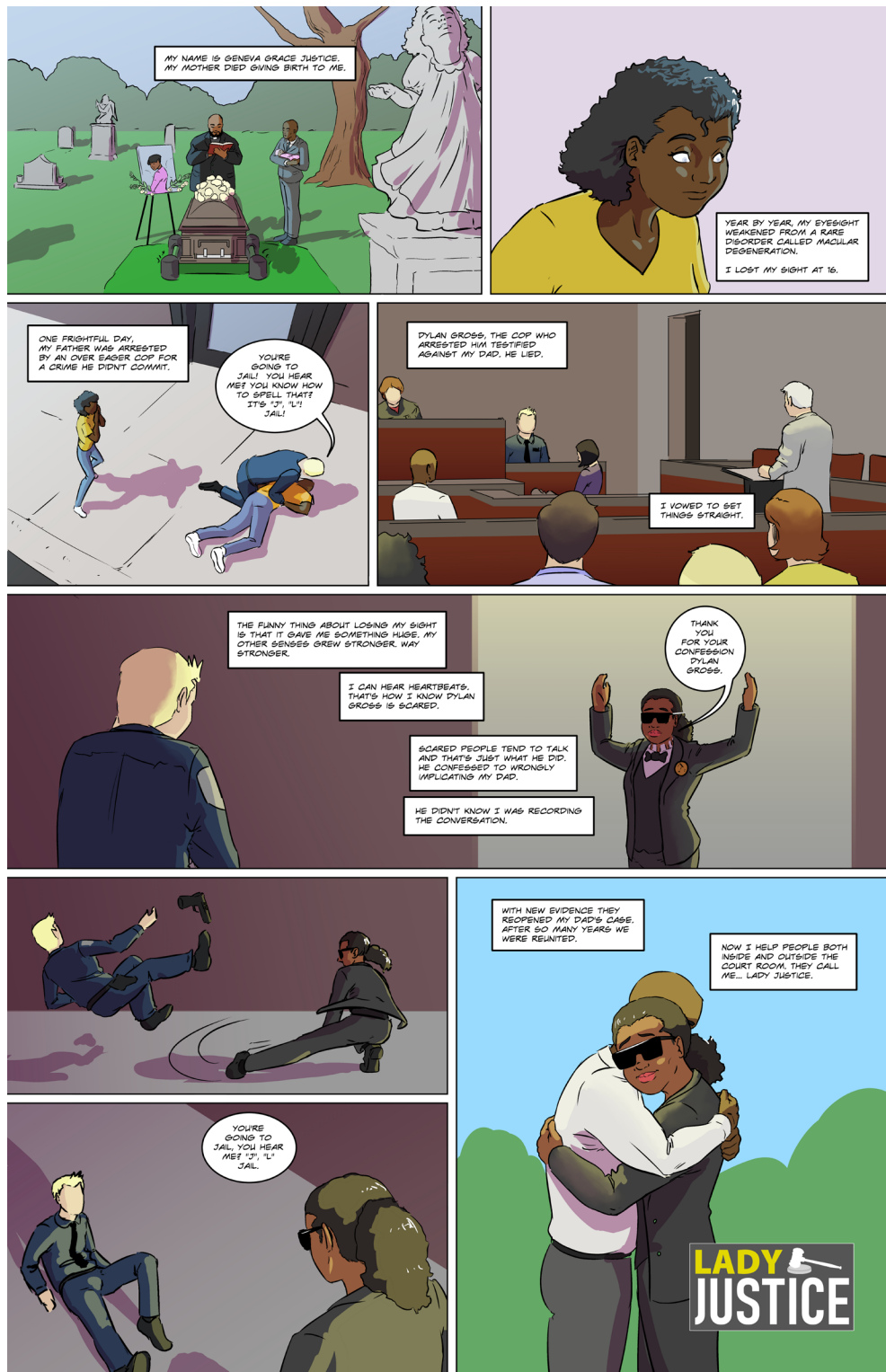
"First, if you step back and look at the grand picture of what happened. I feel that our teachers, staff, technology resources have taken a huge step forward. We moved the needle ahead 3 years in just 3 months. In other words, all teachers were trained in all things Google; we had a huge increase and usage of the technology software that we own since teachers were looking for ways to engage and use our tools in Google Classroom. We moved on using a classroom monitoring tool we were looking at implementing (NetRef), but the pandemic made it the best option, so we implemented it. We also had an increase in teachers looking to or completing a Google Certified Educator exam. The pandemic has forced us to become more digital in our instruction, to look at new ways to engage students, and provided time for teachers to learn new skills and apply them. Not any one person is responsible for this success, but we needed to find a way to accomplish this and feel our team did a great job!"

Art and Literacy Integration

Another noteworthy highlight this year has been our youths' participation in an interstate contest sponsored by the National Center on Improving Literacy entitled, [CLASH of the HEROES](#). This contest centered on the creation of a special edition of a comic book. Youths were encouraged to use their creative drawing and writing skills. In Stage 1, youth designed a (superhero) character with a name, aesthetic, and origin that made the character a hero. In Stage 2, youth used their creative writing skills to tell an origin story that was centered on conflict and resolution. The winning submission, Lady Justice, with a deeply compelling and detailed story of her origin, motivations, talents, and challenges, received 277 votes and was selected to represent Massachusetts. Below is the artwork from Stage 1 and the final product.



Lady Justice (Seer)



Author Initials: N.A.

Lady Justice: The Fight Without Sight (Seer)

Health and Wellness

As part of our Health and Wellness curriculum, teachers continued to implement the Session I curriculum of the Boston Public Health Commission's "The Halls" and expanded the curriculum by offering Season II. As noted in the Boston Public Health Commission website, "The Halls" is a two-season web series which "explores messaging around unhealthy masculinity, consent, homophobia, young fatherhood, unhealthy versus healthy relationships, trauma, and LGBTQ+ topics."

This year, the Boston Public Health Commission trained the DYS Health and Wellness teachers on the Sexually Explicit Media Literacy curriculum that focuses on (un)/healthy dating and attitudes, consent, risk factors for sexual exploitation, and unacceptability of violence in relationships. During class presentations, the youths were highly engaged in this subject matter and respectfully asked pertinent questions on the sensitive materials presented.

Workplace Readiness

Consistent with the expectations of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, DYS is committed to supporting youth to be prepared for the demands of further education and a contemporary workplace. To meet this commitment, DYS has invested in curricular resources and materials that benefit all learners from high school and beyond and trainings to support teachers in integrating the new resources into their lessons.

These investments have had a profound impact on youth outcomes as well as motivation. In the Northeast Region, DYS funded a teacher to lead the vocational training program. The Reclamation Woodcraft program teaches youth how to create customized craft projects to order, recycle/upcycle older products and materials to give them a new life and function in an eco-friendly manner, and create products that are used for donations to support local schools. The mission of Reclamation Woodcraft is to teach youth on the job, technical skills, that can be used in a variety of trade positions, and soft skills that can be used in all settings. Continuing education for youth with a high school attainment is a core ingredient of the program as is the acquisition of industry recognized certificates. All youth participants worked towards completion of an OSHA 30 Certificate, as well as additional task specific OSHA certifications. Some youth enrolled in personal enrichment classes through Bristol Community College or took online courses at Bunker Hill Community College.

Below are some of the products created by the youth in the Reclamation Woodcraft project:



Upcycled Jeep Pedal Car – Proceeds went to Cradles for Crayons



Jungle Kids table and chairs – Proceeds went to Fisher House



Cornhole Set – Proceeds went to Fisher House



Student stools made for the Weatherbee Elementary School
(custom artwork done by students at Weatherbee)

Title I Services

Title I, Part D offers federal funding to improve the quality of education in facilities for neglected and delinquent youth who have yet to attain their high school attainment and are under the age of 21. DYS has historically used Title I funds for Literacy Specialists to support youth with significant literacy skills deficits and youth identified as English Learners (EL). Once a youth is referred to a Literacy Specialist, the youth's public-school records, and any assessment data are reviewed and used to develop an Individual Reading Plan. Youth who are assessed at below-grade-level performance (typically by two grades or more) or are EL, are provided targeted one-on-one instruction by a Literacy Specialist. The Literacy Specialists are assigned to work with youth in the DYS residential treatment programs.

During the 2019-2020 School Year, Literacy Specialists provided reading supports to youth using one or more of the following reading programs: SRA Corrective Reading, Achieve Maximum Potential (AMP), Verbalizing and Visualizing, Great Leaps. These programs were supplemented with specialized reading software that included Thinking Reader, Open Book, Lexia Core5 Reading, and Lexia PowerUp, which helped youth build the literacy skills to comprehend, analyze, and evaluate increasingly complex literary and informational texts.

Literacy Specialists were also instrumental in supporting youth on their path to obtaining their HiSET®. One story of success is that of Jamal* who arrived in the Metro Region in the fall of 2019. He scored below the cut off score on all his HiSET®, practice subtests. He scored 54% correct in the reading, with test data showing a deficit in the elements of poetry (imagery, alliteration, onomatopoeia, etc.). Since there is always a poetry passage on the HiSET® reading assessment, the English Language Arts team in the Metro Region created a unit on poetry. They used the book *Hip Hop Poetry*, by Alan Sitomer and Michael Cirelli, as the cornerstone for instruction. The unit was a success. In February, Jamal retook and passed the reading practice test with a score of 77%. He had answered correctly all six questions in the poetry passage. In March, Jamal passed all HiSET®, practice tests except for science, but pressed on through the Spring until he passed and obtained his HiSET® Diploma.

Another success story is Rafael*, who was in a DYS operated residential program from late spring 2019 until May 2020 and then transferred to a DYS provider operated home. Rafael took all HiSET® practice tests but did not pass any, scoring only a 60% in reading. Like Jamal, one of his deficits was in the elements of poetry, and he greatly benefited from engaging in the poetry unit. At the same time, the Literacy Specialist created a plan for Rafael to work on academic language. In January, Rafael scored 75% on the reading practice test. In the Spring, he took the math and writing portions of the formal HiSET® test and passed them both. Persevering into the summer, Rafael passed the three remaining tests.

Literacy Specialists also track student progress by using a quantitative measure of literacy skills called an Informal Reading Inventory (IRI). The Diagnostic Assessments of Reading (DAR), is the most commonly used IRI. DAR assesses word recognition, vocabulary, oral reading, silent reading comprehension, listening comprehension, spelling, and other skills. Youth who received Literacy Specialist support and took more than one IRI last school year had **average gains of half a grade (spelling) to over one grade (vocabulary)**. Given that the average time between tests was **just over 4.5 months**, this is **exceptional improvement**. The charts below show those Grade Level Expectations (GLE) gains.

* Pseudonyms are being used to protect youth confidentiality.

The charts below show those Grade Level Expectations (GLE) gains.

INFORMAL READING INVENTORY (IRL): AVERAGE GAINS IN FY20			
	# students	Average GLE change	Average months since previous test
Vocabulary	23	1.2	4.6
Listening Comprehension	9	.9	2.8
Oral Reading	20	.9	4.6
Silent Reading Comprehension	24	.8	4.7
Word Recognition	25	.8	4.6
Spelling	24	.5	4.6

The additional support provided by the Literacy Specialists has helped youth make significant progress toward grade-level literacy. See table below.

STUDENTS WHO IMPROVED FROM ONE TEST TO THE NEXT IN FY20			
	# students	Average GLE change	Average months since previous test
Oral Reading	12 (60%)	1.6	5.0
Silent Reading Comprehension	16 (67%)	1.6	5.2
Vocabulary	19 (83%)	1.6	4.5
Word Recognition	16 (64%)	1.4	4.7
Listening Comprehension	8 (89%)	1.4	2.9
Spelling	12 (50%)	1.2	3.9

Literacy Specialists also supported youth in detention by developing specific packets of schoolwork for them, checking weekly on their progress, and establishing office hours for youth to reach out by phone call or Google Meet with questions or concerns regarding their work.

B. OVERVIEW OF THE SY 2019-2020 DYS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

Research shows that professional development leads to better instruction and improved student learning when it connects to the curriculum materials that teachers use, state academic standards that guide their work, and the assessment and accountability measures that evaluate their success.

Highly Qualified Faculty

DYS supports the ongoing professionalization of the education workforce. Research consistently finds highly qualified teachers to be a key to successful learning for all youth. DYS contracted education partners are expected to attract, hire, train, and retain highly qualified teachers who share a commitment to work with DYS youth. In 2008, DYS established the contract goal that 95% of the instructional staff be licensed, in possession of a waiver or have documentation demonstrating adequate progress in working toward licensure. In FY20, 100% of the instructional staff met this goal. Seventy-nine (79%) percent of teachers held more than one content area license and over half (54%) held a professional license, the highest level attainable in Massachusetts. Eighty-one (81%) percent of the teachers and educational administrators earned their Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) endorsement to better support the 16.4% of DYS youth who are English Learners.

Professional Development Goals

During SY 2019-2020, educators participated in a set of systematic and purposeful learning experiences designed to improve teacher practice and lead to improved student outcomes. Through professional development (PD), teachers get to enhance their skills in the planning and implementation of high-quality instruction while sharing and learning from one another on how to meet the diverse needs of the DYS population.

Our professional development program is designed to increase teachers' subject matter knowledge and expertise in Google Suite and other technologies that support current statewide and regional professional development goals that include:

- Creating a personalized approach to teaching and learning in DYS classrooms;
- Promoting Future Ready postsecondary education and career development skills in young people;
- Providing guidelines for effective instructional planning, including co-planning in DYS/SEIS settings; and,
- Expanding infrastructures for technology integration through blended learning.

These professional development goals help our educators be successful in demonstrating proficiency in the DYS Standards and Indicators of Effective Teaching (Curriculum, Planning, and Assessment; Teaching All Students; Family and Community; and Professional Culture) that mirror the Massachusetts Model for Effective Teaching.

Additionally, a comprehensive five-day New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) was launched for new teachers that would fulfill DESE's new teacher induction licensure requirements and support new teachers in their transition to teaching in DYS programs. The NTIP included sessions on Being an Effective Teacher in DYS, Creating Positive Classroom Culture and Effective Classroom Management, Collaborative Planning Process, Designing Education for Access for All Learners, Planning for Effective Instruction, and Instructional Technology. Working with your Instructional Coaches, and Self-Care.

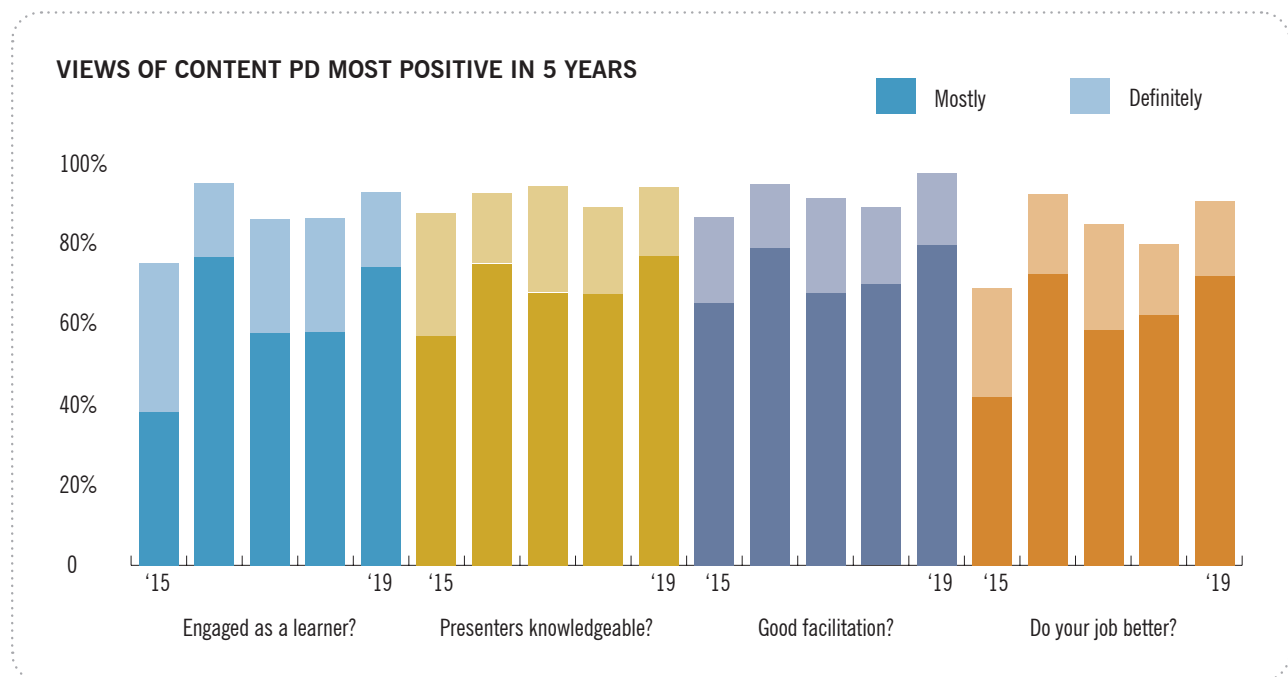
Professional Development Implementation

The SY 2019-2020 general and special educator PD series heightened educators' awareness of the importance of embedding design thinking/maker pedagogy into the collaborative planning process for content instruction, postsecondary education, and career-ready experiences and opportunities for DYS youth. This year's PD series also incorporated the design elements of social justice and culturally responsive teaching and special education strategies and skills. A PD Workshop Model resembling classroom instruction in DYS settings was implemented to support best practices in promoting civic engagement and cultural responsiveness across a range of youth concentrations and pursuits.

Teachers' Experience of Professional Development

Regular feedback from DYS teachers has helped guide the PD Planning Group's thinking about how to structure and choose content for its major PD pull-out days when large groups of teachers come together for content-specific or special professional topics learning.

As shown in the chart below, teachers' feedback on the PD presentations were very favorable.



Professional Development Pandemic Response

To support our teachers to successfully engage youth using remote technologies, daily training on blended learning and integration of online tools and resources were offered. During the first 5 weeks of the pandemic, we created **daily** hyperdocs to structure lessons and training supports for teachers. This was followed by a weekly list of optional training courses that teachers can choose based on their personal and professional interest and try out with the support of the CES instructional coach.

Below is a table of the trainings offered:

Event	Description/Target Audience	Number
G-Suites	Training provided for all general education staff on various G Suite Apps including Google Forms, Google Draw, Google Classroom, Google Slides, Google Gradebook, Google Drive, Google Calendar, Accessibility tools in Google	43 statewide trainings 82 regional trainings
Google Certification	Training provided to teachers seeking Google Certification	44 statewide trainings
Software/Content	Training provided to teachers on various supplemental software tools and core content online resources. (Gizmos, Kahn Academy, Discovery Education, PearDeck, BrainPop, NewsELA, Quizlet, ELA, Math, Science, History)	41 statewide trainings 32 regional trainings
NetRef Online Classroom Monitoring System	Training for all teachers	3 statewide trainings 11 regional trainings
Student Engagement Strategies to support Remote Learning	Training for all teachers	5 statewide trainings 6 regional trainings
Digital Citizenship	Training for all teachers	4 Statewide trainings
TOTAL		271

Below are quotes from teachers about their experiences with remote teaching and blended learning support:

"I was able to work on creating new thematic Google classrooms using what I have learned and referring back to the various play lists provided to enhance my classrooms. I also got re-introduced to PearDeck."

"Chromebook accessibility features help with so much, especially with students who are not good readers or writers but are at grade level content."

"CES has done a remarkable job providing us with tools and resources needed to implement remote training."

"I thought the most useful thing was the document about getting students started on Google Classroom. This needs to be given to every program and used as an enrichment activity before a program gets going using Google Classroom so that staff and students alike are familiar with things."

"Moving forward, I [would] appreciate virtual office hours for coaches to address questions about the more advanced features of Google Classroom."

First Annual Addressing Racial Trauma Conference

On January 27, 2020, DYS held our interdisciplinary Addressing Racial Trauma conference. Considering most of our youth are from marginalized communities, it continues to be a priority for everyone at DYS to understand the youth we serve and the racial trauma they experience, to avoid its perpetuation in programs. Over 350 participants from education, clinical, and residential sectors serving DYS youth attended the workshops focused on “Addressing Racial Trauma: Interrupting Racism and Teaching Resilience.” Listed below are the workshops offered:

- An Exploration of Race, Racism and Racial Trauma: Looking Back to Move Forward
- Unmasking Racial Trauma: Healing the mental, emotional, and relational lives of Youth of Color
- Making Space for Truth and Trauma
- Deeper Than Rap “Hip-Hop Culture’s Potential Impact in the Classroom”
- Teaching and Learning for Healing and Freedom: Exploring Unconscious Bias, Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy, and Social Justice Education
- Using Latinx Cultural Wealth Frameworks to Advance Racial Equity



350+

PARTICIPANTS ATTENDED THE FIRST
ADDRESSING RACIAL TRAUMA CONFERENCE

Content-Based Learning Teams

DYS also hosted 4 regional Content-Based Learning Team (CBLT) meetings which gave content-alike teachers a venue to share practices, analyze student data, and give feedback on mini-units and lesson activities that could enhance classroom teaching and learning within their respective content areas. Most teachers stated that they valued CBLTs because they provided additional opportunities for collaboration around instructional planning, curriculum, and technology resources, and modeling new instructional strategies for content.

Kelly Ryll, Southeast Instructional Coach:

“I worked closely with my colleague, BR, this year to outline an “Ambassador” role for teachers within our Content Based Learning Teams. Our intent was to develop teachers to be ready for leadership and/or mentoring roles within our region. We provided the expectations of this role and then asked for volunteers. We were able to obtain one volunteer per content. We worked closely with ambassadors to include them in the planning and implementation of our CBLT meetings, as well as to prepare them for doing check-ins with their group in between meetings. According to a survey I sent, all teachers found the ambassador check-ins furthered their understanding of our team goal, and their individual work. Ambassadors reported feeling supported and valued for their role and contribution in CBLT meetings. This role allowed for select volunteer teachers to assume a leadership role, which is something we have been working to promote in the southeast.”

Mary McMahon-Chappell, Central Instructional Coach:

"We have been focusing on STEM for science and design thinking in all CBLTs for the past couple of years. Last year we used Shared Drives instead of Google Classroom and the teachers liked that format. It was encouraging to see that half of the respondents in our end of the year survey felt very confident about using Design Thinking strategies. At the beginning of the Pandemic, one of the teachers (Jim Carvill) created shared drives for the math and science teachers to share materials. I asked for volunteers in the other content areas to do the same and I did get volunteers to set up docs or folders for shared materials in every content area. It is apparent that teachers feel comfortable organizing and sharing materials with other teachers in their content areas."

Job-Embedded Coaching

Another strategy DYS utilized to strengthen educator practice is instructional coaching. The instructional coaching framework is based on three research-based coaching modalities:

- **Residency Coaching:** Instructional Coach spends consecutive and/or multiple days – potentially over several weeks – at a program with the teacher or teachers.
- **Rotation Coaching:** Instructional Coach works with a teacher for all or part of a day for a specific, timely coaching request. Multiple visits may be scheduled to address the area of identified professional need and complete the cycle of collaborative inquiry.
- **Virtual Coaching:** Instructional Coach assists teacher(s) with one or more specific practices by phone, email, webinar, or Google Drive.

Coaches found teachers to be more relaxed and receptive during job-embedded, site-based coaching. Teachers reported that the opportunity to observe other teachers in various settings has transformed their approach to classroom and behavioral management, their use of tech tools and hands-on learning, and their overall engagement strategies. Additionally, teachers can earn structured mentoring hours which allow them to maintain or advance their licensure with DESE.

The chart below outlines the scope of professional development opportunities offered during the year to support teacher growth and student engagement in learning.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT TEACHER GROWTH AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING		
PD Event Title	Description/Target Audience	Number of days/hours
New Teacher Induction Program	Teachers new to DYS	22 hours
Launch Day-Racial Justice	Professional development for all DYS General Education staff-PD was conducted regionally on the same day	5.5 hours
Content PD Series	Professional development provided for each content area: ELA, History, Math, Science, Art, Health/ Wellness-All DYS General Education staff	11 hours
Specialized PD Series	Professional Development provided on a variety of specialized topics relevant to teaching and learning in DYS settings	11 hours

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT TEACHER GROWTH AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING		
PD Event Title	Description/Target Audience	Number of days/hours
Education Career Counselor	Tailored professional development for Education Career Counselors	22 hours
Defined STEM (now Defined Learning)	Training for math/science teachers on the Design STEM project-based learning model	5.5 hours
Professional Learning Communities (PLCS)	Art teachers (16.5 hours) Literacy Specialist (16.5 hours) Health/Wellness teachers (16.5 hours)	3 days each
Content Based Learning Teams (CBLTs)	CBLTs provided 3 times per region in each content area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELA (3 days) • History (3 days) • Math (3 days) • Science (3 days) 	3 days
Math Textbook Training	DYS math content teachers-training focused on text and online resources	5.5 hours
Teaching Coordinator Meetings	TC meetings provided by program type 3 times during the year and within the region one time	20 hours
Keys to Literacy	Training for teachers in Key Comprehension Routine	11 hours
LightSail	PD provided for reading teachers	5.5 hours
Reality Works Virtual Welding	Welding career exploration for selected treatment teachers	5.5 hours
Reality Works Electrical Vocational Kit	Electrical career exploration for selected teachers	5.5 hours
STEM training	Communications Pathways webinars	3 hours
New Teaching Coordinator (TC) Training	New Teaching Coordinators in DYS	9 hours
Coordinator Training	Training for DYS REC/ARECs: Evidence Based Observation	4 days
CES Orientation	All DYS General Education staff-via webinar	1 hour
College Program	CES leadership, REC/ARECs, Education and Career Counselors, Teaching Coordinators	4 sessions

II. STUDENT PERFORMANCE DATA

DYS is dedicated to facilitating the academic and 21st century skill development of all our youth. DYS recognizes that each youth in our care and custody is in a different place along their education, college, and career readiness pathways. The DYS educational model provides youth with multiple pathways to academic and vocational growth, including opportunities to achieve success in the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), to pursue and obtain a high school equivalency diploma (the GED® or HiSET®), to earn credits toward a high school diploma, to earn college credits, and to gain 21st century skills and knowledge.

In order to provide context for the following charts on student performance outcomes, it is important to highlight several characteristics of the DYS population influenced in part by “Raise the Age” legislation enacted in 2013 as well as concerted efforts to reduce youth penetration into the juvenile justice system through the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI). First, the DYS youth population is highly transient and, relatedly, has significant gaps in formal schooling. Most of the youth who participate in MCAS testing while in a DYS residential program are enrolled in a DYS education program for less than six months (average length of stay in Treatment programs this past year was 172 days; and the average in Detention programs was 65 days). Consequently, DYS has limited time, sometimes as little as one week, to close significant gaps in a youth’s prior academic knowledge. Second, newly committed youth are more likely to be 17 or older, posing unique challenges to the Department insofar as they tend to be behind in school (over a third are 2+ years behind) than their peers who were committed at age 16 or younger (most of whom are on track or just 1 year behind). This combination of being older and further behind influences the priorities youth have about the type of educational and vocational programming they want while in DYS and upon return to the community. Because of these characteristics and DYS’s commitment to keep youth as close to their families/caregivers as possible, teachers must be prepared to teach youth in a classroom with different educational backgrounds and goals. Some youth are working on earning their diploma or its equivalent across multiple grade spans and subject areas, while other youth are enrolled in college classes and/or vocational programming and need different types of support. Thirdly, DYS adheres to the DESE regulations for participation in the MCAS and therefore the number of students who participate in each subject area test differs. Lastly, since a youth’s home school district is responsible for determining a youth’s eligibility for special education, the population of students with disabilities also fluctuates from year to year.

With this context in mind, we are encouraged by the academic accomplishments achieved by DYS youth as measured by the metrics discussed in this section. We are in our second year of a concentrated effort to increase the use of an online intervention to address gaps in math proficiency, although the pandemic delayed progress in its implementation. We will be watching to see if it has a positive effect on youth math proficiency during SY2020-2021. We recognize the significant gaps in formal learning, academic proficiency, and opportunity many of our youth had faced prior to their involvement with DYS and we are committed to seizing our opportunity to facilitate youth growth and development across academic, social, and vocational domains and to push forward with innovations that maximize this opportunity. We describe these innovations throughout this report to demonstrate the wide range of strategies DYS has leveraged to realize this goal.

In this extraordinary year where in-person classes were cancelled across Massachusetts in mid-March, the usual approach to MCAS test administration—and thus the usual approach to reporting MCAS results—was disrupted. DYS typically reports on the Spring administration, which is meant to reflect on grade-level learning. However, consistent with DESE reporting, no results are available from the spring 2020 assessments due to the cancellation of test administrations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

MCAS Improvements While in Residence (2011-2020)

One way to mark DYS's contribution to students' success on a secondary attainment path is to track how many youths pass the 10th grade MCAS or improve their 10th grade MCAS score while in DYS care and custody. A passing 10th grade MCAS score is key to graduating high school with a competency determination. Youth may take a core content MCAS course in November (retest), March (retest), and Spring (first time or retest) until they pass.

No matter how many times youths take the test, if they eventually pass and meet all other state and local requirements, they can graduate with a competency determination (with a full diploma), rather than with a certificate of attainment. Youth who have not yet passed and are with DYS during any administration window, may take the test, and many youths take MCAS retests at some point. We will help any youth at any point in the DYS service continuum to succeed at MCAS, but it is easier to attribute success specifically to the DYS Education Initiative by focusing on successes realized by first-time committed youth who take a test during their first stay in Treatment (see Performance Overview table below). In the last nine school years, between 58% (Math) and 82% (ELA) of youth who previously failed MCAS prior to commitment passed the 10th grade test they took in their first stay following commitment. Also encouraging is the metric that over half (between 51% and 60%) of youth improved their performance level over a pre-commitment performance level, meaning, for example, that students who had scored 'Needs Improvement' improved either to 'Proficient' or 'Advanced.'

NOTE: The tables below are on youth who were committed for the first time at some point between July 1, 2011, and June 30, 2020, had MCAS scores prior to DYS commitment AND took the 10th grade MCAS while in DYS residence during their first stay following commitment.

PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW	
ELA	<p>Between November 2011 and March 2020, of 106 students who had failed an English MCAS prior to commitment, 86 (81.1%) passed while in residence during their first stay following commitment.</p> <p>Of 255 students who had previously scored Fail, Needs Improvement, or Proficient, 154 (60.3%) improved their performance level to a higher achievement category (Needs Improvement/Partially Met Expectations, Proficient/Met Expectations, or Advanced/Exceeded Expectations).</p>
Math	<p>Between November 2011 and March 2020, of 214 students who had failed a Math MCAS prior to commitment, 125 (58.4%) passed while in residence during their first stay following commitment.</p> <p>Of 295 students who had previously scored Fail, Needs Improvement, or Proficient, 151 (51.2%) improved their performance level to a higher achievement category (Needs Improvement/Partially Met Expectations, Proficient/Met Expectations, or Advanced/Exceeded Expectations).</p>

GAIN Performance Outcomes (SY 2019-2020)

The adoption of the General Assessment of Instructional Need (GAIN) to replace the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) in February 2018 allowed DYS to quickly diagnose gaps in math skills and tailor instruction accordingly. While the administration of GAIN was suspended because of COVID-19, of the 46 youth who did take the posttest in SY 2020 and showed an increase in their grade level equivalent score, they improved their average grade level equivalency score in both English and Math by nearly two years over an average length of stay in a DYS residential program of just under six months.

Since the beginning of the 2020 – 2021 school year, the GAIN has been and will continue to be administered every 60 days for youth in treatment. The results will be incorporated into the quarterly Academic Growth Reporting periods. We believe more frequent administration will provide useful instructional information to teachers, as well as change student perspectives on the value of putting effort into mastering the content.

High School Diploma and High School Equivalency (HiSET®/GED®)

The following are the High School Diploma and HiSET®/GED® attainment data for the past five years. As a result of our collaboration with DESE, DYS has set up five HiSET® testing sites for youth in secure residential treatment programs who are unable to test at a community based HiSET® testing site. However, HiSET® tests were put on hold from mid-March to late June 2020 due to COVID-19 and this contributed to a much lower attainment rate than we might otherwise see. Youth pursuing diplomas in residential programs as well as in the community switched largely to online learning during that time. In the context of a declining DYS overall population, it is even more noteworthy that diploma attainment, as reported below, remained relatively high compared to the previous year.

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA AND HISET®/GED® ATTAINMENT DATA FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS		
School Year	High School Diploma	HiSET®/GED®
2019-2020	49 3 Certificates of Completion	22
2018-2019	55 3 Certificates of Completion	50
2017-2018	86 5 Certificates of Completion	68
2016-2017	88 4 Certificates of Attainment	93
2015-2016	62 3 Certificates of Attainment	63

In SY 2019–2020, Education and Career Counselors registered 16 youth in residential programs for 63 individual subject matter tests. Twenty-nine* youth in residential programs and the community had taken the complete battery of tests by the end of SY20. Twenty-two* passed and earned a HiSET® Diploma. As the data below indicates, youth in DYS had a pass rate comparable to their peers across Massachusetts. Moreover, it is worth noting that math, reading, and writing scores were equal to or higher than peers across both Massachusetts and the nation.

RECENT HISET® PASS RATE COMPARISON			
	Total Batteries Completed	Pass	Pass Rate
DYS – SY 2019-2020*	29	22	76%
Massachusetts – CY 2019**	3,127	2,395	77%
Nationwide – CY 2019**	50,879	40,375	79%

*Includes only students for whom we have scores

**CY 2019 data include results of tests taken January – December 2019. Source: 2019 Annual Statistical Report on the HiSET® Exam: https://hiset.ets.org/s/pdf/2019_annual_statistical_report.pdf, pp. 10-11

RECENT HISET® AVERAGE SCORES BY SUBJECT

	Math	Social Studies	Science	ELA Reading	ELA Writing
DYS – SY 2019-2020* (N)	11.5 (32)	11.7 (31)	11.4 (30)	10.6 (33)	10.7 (31)
Massachusetts – CY 2019**	10.2	12.4	11.6	9.6	10.4
Nationwide – CY 2019**	10.3	12.7	11.8	10.1	10.7

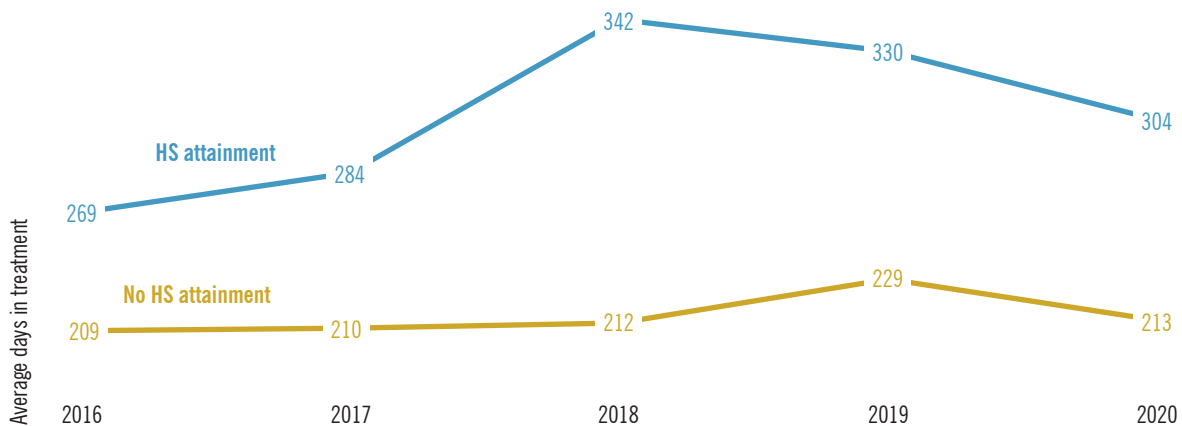
*Includes a) only students for whom we have scores, b) best score for those students who took a test twice during the year, and c) any score regardless of whether full battery was completed.

**CY 2019 data include results of 'All Attempts' (not just first) tests taken January – December 2019. Source: 2019 Annual Statistical Report on the HiSET® Exam: https://hiset.ets.org/s/pdf/2019_annual_statistical_report.pdf, pp. 29-30

HiSET® is accepted as a High School Equivalency in American Samoa, California, Colorado, Guam, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Marshall Islands, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Northern Marianas, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, and Wyoming.

It bears highlighting that our analysis of recent high school attainment data for committed youth continue to show that the longer youth are with DYS, particularly in treatment programs, the more likely they will attain a high school diploma or equivalency. Greater access to a strong set of educational supports—material, structural, and human—clearly has helped youth in contact with MA's juvenile justice system to achieve this important milestone.

COMMITTED YOUTH WHO GET HIGH SCHOOL ATTAINMENTS BEFORE THEY AGE OUT OF DYS ARE IN TREATMENT 60-130 DAYS LONGER ON AVERAGE THAN THOSE WHO DON'T GET HIGH SCHOOL ATTAINMENTS



NOTE: Each year's data are based on youth who aged out that year, not on attainments achieved that year.

III. POSTSECONDARY PROGRAMMING

DYS is invested in guiding youth to see themselves as capable postsecondary students by providing equitable access to college opportunities, preparing them to be college and career ready, and offering a menu of postsecondary and career exploration opportunities. The high-quality DYS College Program has received recognition and support from the Commonwealth's Executive Office of Education, DESE and the Department of Higher Education.

DYS College Program

Through the DYS College Program, youth in DYS' residential programs receive early and authentic college experiences. They can participate in virtual and in-person sessions with college advisors to matriculate towards an associate's or bachelor's degree, or to dually enroll. They can earn college credits through online college courses and by taking college classes taught in our residential programs by college adjunct faculty. Youth enrolled in high school or preparing for a high school equivalency credential may dually enroll and earn both high school credits and college credits for completed college courses. Under the guidance of Education and Career Counselors, these youth receive transition planning and wrap-around services that continue to support their efforts in earning a college degree when they return to the community.

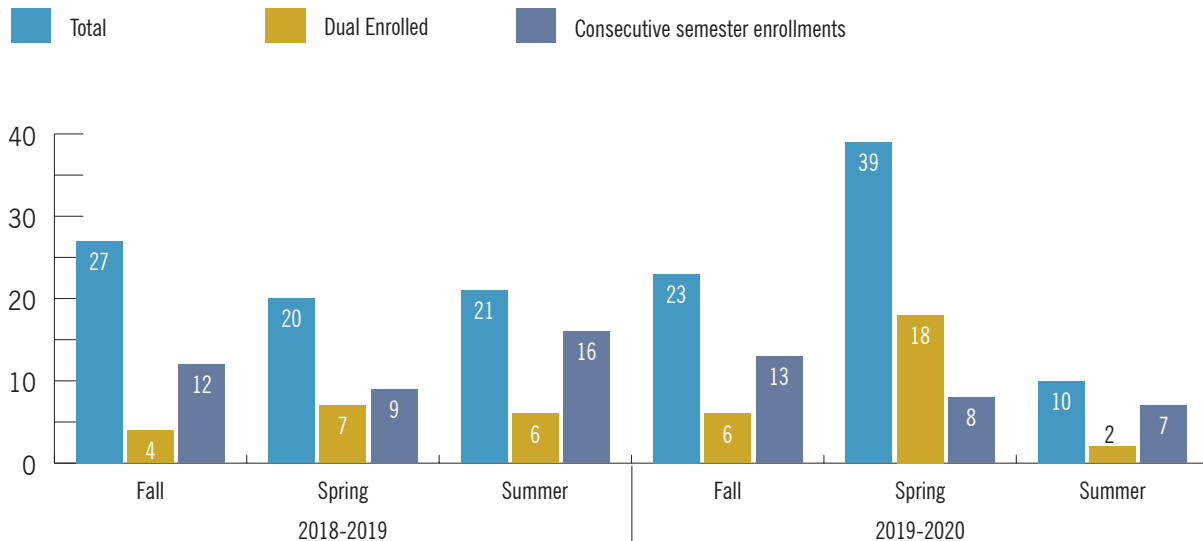
Despite the challenges that the pandemic has created for programming, we utilized every possible moment to help faculty curate engaging remote learning opportunities and to bolster our college programming with live virtual facilitation by college faculty. This effort has resulted in a doubling of our partnerships with community colleges from three to six partners and contracts with two higher education partners to create college credit bearing certificate programs in Hospitality and Digital Publishing. Youth enrolled in these courses can use these stackable credentials toward an associate's or bachelor's degree and earn industry recognized certificates after they transition to the community. Below are some highlights from this year's residential College Program.

- An increase in the number of youths graduating from dual enrollment to college matriculation after earning a high school credential and the number of matriculating youths persevering semester to semester towards a college credential. When SY 2019-2020 ended, we had nine students across the state who matriculated through at least two semesters toward degree programs with plans to continue to matriculate into SY 2020-2021. We had a tenth student who began taking college courses in fall 2017. He persevered semester after semester, matriculating toward an associate degree in Psychology. He graduated from community college with his associate degree in August 2020, just before his transition out of DYS residential programming.
- 21 youth enrolled in high school or preparing for the high school equivalency exam, were dually enrolled in college courses, up from 16 the previous year.
- 25 youth took college courses taught by college adjunct faculty in ten DYS facilities statewide. There were 4 to 8 students in each class who were dually enrolled or matriculated (with a high school credential) students. Engagement in these courses was high and enthusiasm for enrollment spread among the youth. A total of five courses were taught.
- 52 dually enrolled and matriculated students took 121 college courses, either online or in classes taught by adjunct college faculty in DYS facilities; 47 completed all or nearly all their courses. 68% successfully earned at least 75% of the credits they attempted across the year.

An overview of residential College Program's overall enrollments, dual enrollments, and semester-level persistence appears in the figure below. In Spring 2020, 18 out of 39 youth were dually enrolled. Even during the pandemic, we were generally encouraged by our students' resilience in postsecondary coursework.

COLLEGE PROGRAM ENROLLMENTS & CONSECUTIVE TO NEXT SEMESTER ARE A MIXED BAG ACROSS THE LAST TWO YEARS, LIKELY DUE TO COVID-19; DUAL ENROLLMENT INTEREST IS ENCOURAGING

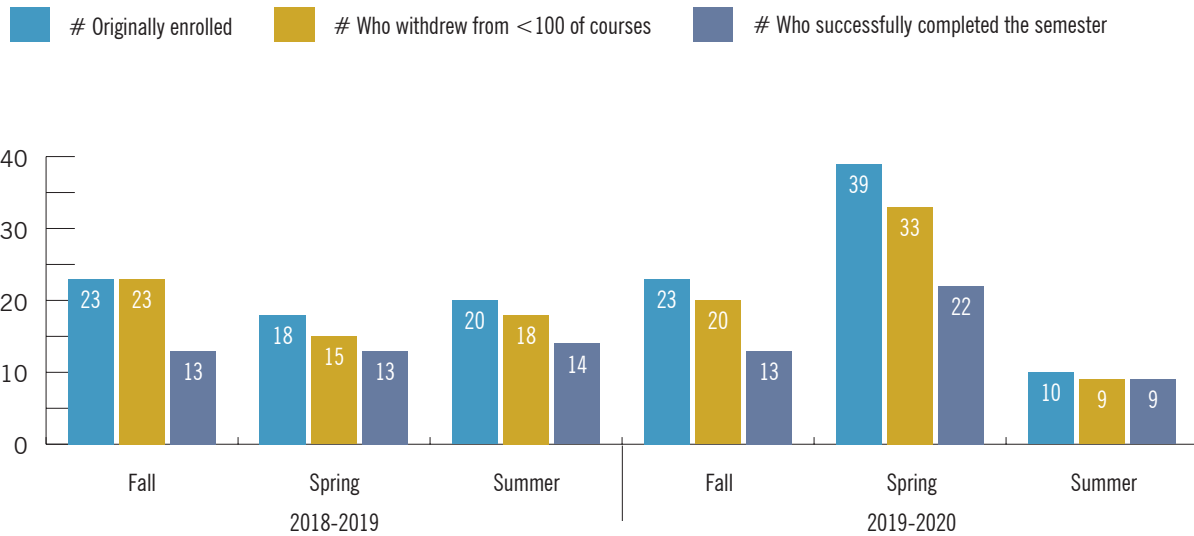
SY2019 & SY2020



We are especially proud of the proportion of students who successfully completed their course loads in Spring 2020 despite the changes the pandemic wrought on educational programming in DYS facilities. As the figure below shows, while a larger proportion (6 of 39) of youth withdrew from all Spring classes, 22 of the 33 youth who continued with at least one of their original course enrollments successfully completed the course. The total includes dual enrolled youth to show granular detail of students taking college classes. Those who had consecutive semester enrollments represent a combination of the total and dual enrolled.

COLLEGE PROGRAM STUDENTS LARGELY STUCK WITH THEIR COURSEWORK IN SY2020 AND SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THEIR COURSELOADS AT RELATIVELY HIGH RATES, EVEN CONSIDERING THE PANDEMIC CONDITIONS IN SPRING

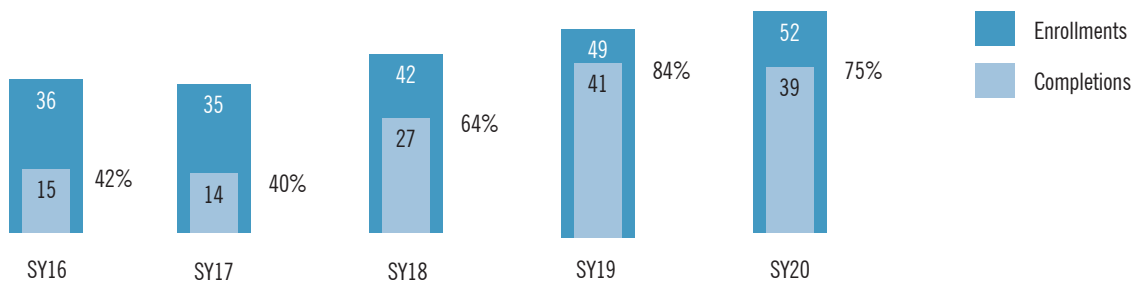
SY2019 & SY2020



Overall Postsecondary Enrollments and Completions

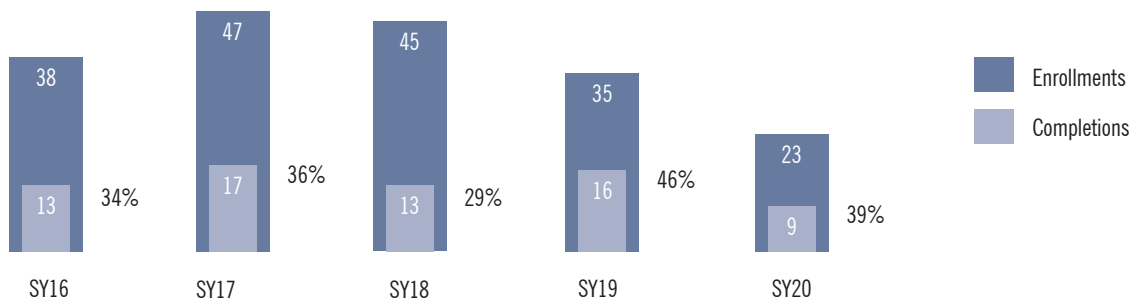
When we look at school year-level data, rather than at semesters, as in previous figures, we see strong indicators of greater interest and success in residential college credit-bearing coursework. Per the figure below, since SY 2016-2017, DYS has seen a 51% increase in numbers of students enrolling and significant increases in the successful completion of at least one course. COVID-19 did inhibit course completion for youth in residence enrolled in Spring 2021 courses as their access to their courses was interrupted for three weeks mid-semester.

RESIDENTIAL STUDENTS: ENROLLMENTS IN POSTSECONDARY COURSES HAVE INCREASED; COMPLETIONS REMAIN HIGH



While DYS continues to support postsecondary youth in the community, we have not seen the same upward trend in postsecondary enrollments and completions (See figure below which shows all students enrolled, regardless of whether we have course information, while the number of completions counted only youth for whom we have course information.) Community enrollments in postsecondary coursework during COVID-19 has declined. This decline may be exacerbated by community factors that include youth having more distractions and responsibilities and less built-in structure and support. Nevertheless, their completion rates remain relatively high and appear to be attributable to the youth's commitment and the support of DYS staff and caring adults.

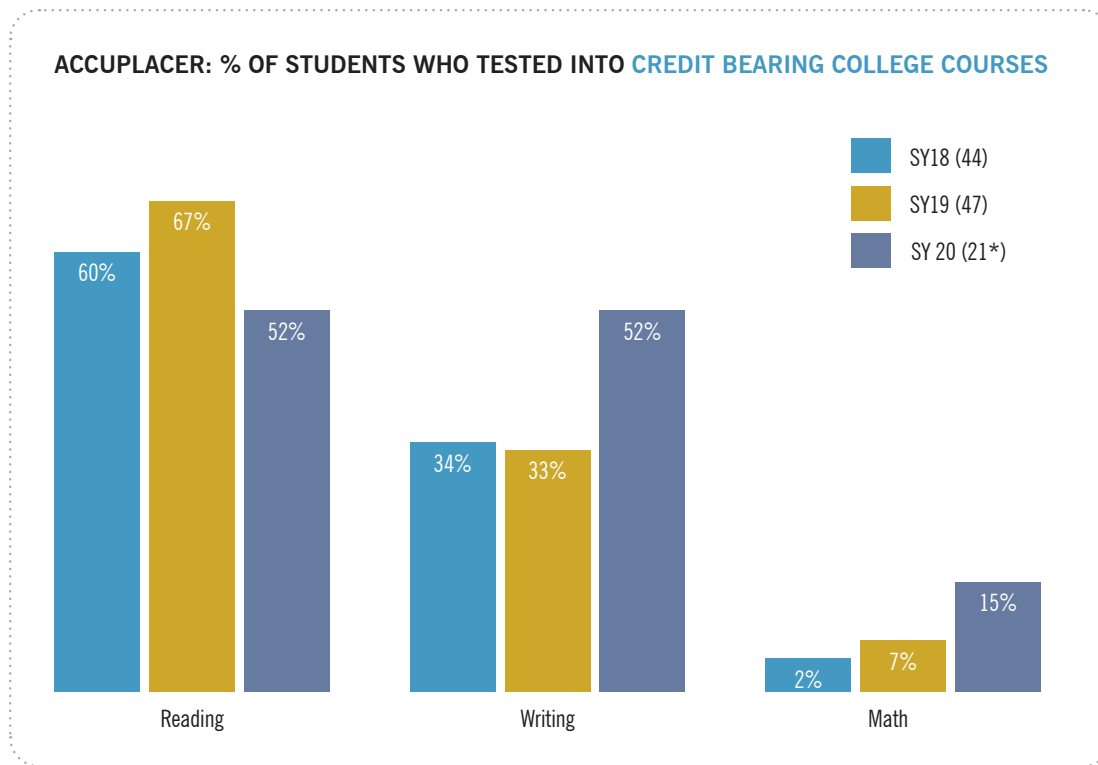
COMMUNITY STUDENTS: ENROLLMENTS IN POSTSECONDARY COURSES DECREASED; COMPLETIONS ARE COMPARABLE TO PREVIOUS YEARS DESPITE COVID-19 INTERRUPTIONS



ACCUPLACER

The ACCUPLACER is an integrated system of computer-adaptive assessments designed to evaluate students' skills in reading, writing, and mathematics for placement into college level courses. Due to the pandemic, ACCUPLACER testing was cancelled for Spring and Summer 2020 but alternative assessments were conducted.

As shown in the chart below, more than half of the youth successfully placed out of developmental reading courses. Developmental courses are for youth whose ACCUPLACER scores indicate a need for remedial academic support. One third to one half of the youth were eligible to enroll directly into credit-bearing writing courses, and under ten percent were eligible to enroll directly into credit-bearing math courses.



* Accuplacer was administered in Fall 2019 but not in the Spring or Summer of 2020.

William J. Wolfe Scholarship

The William J. Wolfe (WJW) Scholarship Fund was established to honor Mr. Wolfe, founder of Key Program, Inc., and his commitment to social, educational, health, and human services. In SY 2019-2020, four DYS youth were each awarded a \$5,000 scholarship.

Brandeis Program

Five DYS youth from two regions got the opportunity to attend several sessions of the Investigating Justice Journalism undergraduate course on the campus of Brandeis University. The experience gave the youth a voice, an opportunity to demonstrate leadership skills and to see themselves as college going students. The youth reported that they noticed that they looked like the college students and had a lot more in common than they may have thought prior to participating in the class. The Brandeis students, on the other hand, realized that they could communicate and work effectively with a population with whom they may have never interacted with before. During the four weeks of instruction, the DYS youth learned that writing is basic to journalism and accessible to all of them. The program culminated in presentations of the news articles written by each group.

Career Readiness

DYS has developed and will continue to add Career Ready experiences to expose youth to future education and career options and provide opportunities for skill development and mastery over time. These experiences complement and enrich the acquisition of academic competencies.

The table below demonstrates the number of industry recognized certificates youth attained.

Industry-Recognized Career Readiness Attainments Earned in Residence	SY20
CPR: Adult, Infant, Child and First Aid Certification	45
CareerSafe OSHA 10: General Industry, Construction Industry,	26
ServSafe Food Handler	8
ServSafe Food Manager	7
American Screen Printing Association Certified Screen Printer (ASPA)	3
ISSA Personal Trainer	1
C-Tech Telecom	1
Total	91

IV. TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

To improve access for DYS youth to postsecondary and credentialing opportunities and required standardized testing (e.g. online MCAS testing), DYS has strategically invested in technology and technology infrastructure in all residential programs. This has included the development of a layered approach to technology access and learning tools that is tailored to the individual needs of youth and addresses the safety and security considerations that our agency must manage. As part of this approach, we accomplished the following:

Remote Teaching and Learning

As a result of prior work completed in the implementation of G-Suites for Education and Google Classroom, and the following changes, DYS was able to transition seamlessly to remote teaching and learning when necessary, as illustrated by the following:

- Extended availability and training of G-Suites for Education and Google Classroom to all programs, including Revocation and Detention
- Implementation of Google Meet and Zoom for education staff and deployment of over thirty video meeting laptops state-wide so that teachers working remotely could connect with students in programs
- Migration to NetRef Classroom Management and Monitoring Software, allowing monitoring and student Internet access to be managed both in-program *and* remotely, something the previous monitoring solution lacked. In addition, NetRef allows educators to assess student time spent on-task through advanced real-time reporting at the student and program level. All education staff have been trained to use this software.
- Deployment of a device-side filtering solution so that student devices could be connected to cellular hotspots for use in quarantine areas where the E-Rate network does not exist
- Addition of a third wireless network to the existing infrastructure so that program devices used for remote family visits could be connected to Wi-Fi where other networks were not available

Infrastructure Improvements

- Additional non-wireless connected specialized laptops (Endless OS) were deployed in secure residential programs to expand access to learning with technology during residential non-classroom hours. In SY 2019-2020, 80 English-language and 32 Spanish-language devices were deployed. As a result, youth were able to continue learning and explore their interests independently. The majority of our youth who are English Language Learners speak Spanish, so it was important to give them a device that allowed them to continue learning in their own language.



- E-Rate upgrades made in SY 2019-2020:
 - Residential programs in Plymouth and Brewster were moved from T1 copper connections to satellite connections
 - DYS worked with Addition Networks (now Cherry Road) to upgrade all other sites from Verizon to Comcast fiber, including replacing outdated Cisco routing equipment with Ubiquiti EdgeRouters at all sites.
- Other new technology
 - Over 100 Vivi secure wireless display adapters, along with direct-view displays, were configured for deployment and training in all DYS programs.

HiSET® Testing

Testing equipment in all five DYS regions for administration of the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET®) was upgraded with new laptops and network switching infrastructure.

Safety and Security

- Deployed Yubico security keys to all programs that use G-Suites for Education to mitigate the risks associated with sharing of account credentials between students and logins of student Google accounts on unauthorized devices
- Deployed SmartDoc security software for G-Suites for Education to prevent students from viewing Google files shared to them from outside domains or from other students
- Required all youth using technology to sign a Responsible Use Policy to promote responsible digital citizenship as part of the deployment of new mobile technologies.

V. SPECIAL EDUCATION

The DYS Comprehensive Educational Partnership and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) Special Education in Institutional Settings (SEIS) Office are committed to mutually developing and supporting a culture in DYS Educational Programs that provides special education students access to the general curriculum and personal learning. DYS assumes responsibility for youth with 504 plans while DESE assumes responsibility for youth with IEP's. As a result of this partnership, youth receive personalized instruction that met their academic needs, allowing them to make progress towards their educational goals. The following activities supporting this commitment took place during the past school year.

- Joint professional development for SEIS and DYS educators focused on the year's theme of Future Ready: Personalizing Teaching, Learning, and Transition Planning, with an emphasis on the application of Future Ready Skills. Presentations demonstrated the integration of these skills into content curriculum and instruction and familiarized teachers with a variety of related supplemental resources. Embedded throughout sessions were models of co-planning, co-teaching, station learning, whole group, and independent learning. Included was integration of technology to access curriculum, and blended learning opportunities for students. The presentations promoted educator collaboration in implementing planning practices that support youth transition efforts throughout the DYS continuum of care. Additionally, DYS and SEIS educators shared in specialized trainings based on teacher identified topics aligned with the year's professional development theme.
- Learning Teams, composed of DYS and SEIS staff, met regularly in all DYS programs to share knowledge and understanding of individual student needs to promote a more inclusive and personalized educational program for DYS youth.
- Continued implementation of co-planning by special and general educators using designated tools and processes occurred across all programs with an evaluation finding there was more consistent use by DYS and SEIS educators and an improved instructional planning process.
- The Agency Coordination Process for special education eligible students detained by or committed to DYS was reviewed and updated to reflect programmatic or regulatory changes and changes in DYS educational program practice. These joint agency guidelines reflect best practices and support more effective and efficient procedures for communication, service provision planning and inclusion of special education students in the general education program.
- DYS and SEIS worked with DESE to increase the frequency for the transfer of the Data Detained Match (DDM) file to provide more timely information that DYS educators can use to determine service delivery.
- Continued collaboration around data sharing between DYS and SEIS facilitated the optimal use of a shared software system for managing student data. This system enables the early identification of youth eligible for special education and for all educators to understand the needs for modifications and accommodations for students with disabilities.
- Continued universal screening process for all youth to help educators identify when an evaluation for special education may be warranted.
- Regional Educational Transition Teams that include DYS and SEIS staff met monthly to help with consistency in the implementation of educational services and transition planning processes for youth, including youth with Individual Education Plans.
- DYS and SEIS co-facilitated an MCAS workgroup that provided updated accessibility and accommodation information for all educators and developed a plan to train all educators on computer – based testing policies.

- Evaluated and optimized the instructional technology tools that are available to all youth. SEIS and DYS Instructional coaches provided onsite training and classroom support to implement Google Read and Write across DYS programs. The efforts included co-coaching, program based training, and regional based training.

VI. TRANSITION SYSTEM

The DYS Transition System exemplifies the operationalization of “think exit upon entry” for youth committed to the custody of the Department. The Transition System provides a personalized course of study that helps youth with successful re-entry back into the community. Each time there is an intake of a youth to a residential program, the Teaching Coordinator (TC) holds a Welcoming Orientation for DYS and the youth to get to know each other, build rapport, and ease the youth’s transition into the DYS classroom. Last year, there were 243 Welcoming Orientation meetings.

Each youth committed to DYS is assigned an Education and Career Counselors (ECC) to work with the youth’s home school district. The strong collaborative relationships that ECCs foster with the home schools increases the odds of a youth’s successful re-entry. In SY 2019-2020, ECCs worked with an average of 54 youth which included an average of 13 YES (Youth Engaged in Services) youth.

The ECC is responsible for preparing a Graduation Grid based on the youth’s education records and a credit audit. This information is entered into the Aspen Student Management System which the Teaching Coordinators use to determine what courses students need to graduate or attain a credential. The ECC is also integral to the development of youths’ online and individually curated e-Portfolio, which every committed youth develops in treatment programs. Not only does the e-Portfolio contain a youth’s College and Career Plan, the youth’s goals and the youth’s work and art, the e-Portfolio allows each youth’s voice to guide their educational experience in DYS and can serve as a valuable tool to show potential employers or post-secondary educators. The e-Portfolio also advances an important goal of the MA Department of Education for all youth to develop a college and career plan, referred to as their MyCAP (My Career and Academic Plan).

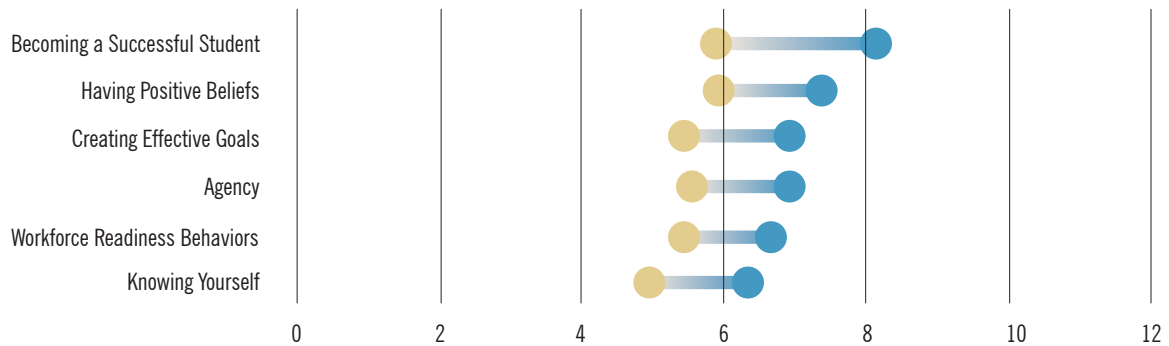
An “ECC Intro Meeting” is held the third week after a youth’s commitment to DYS, followed by the initial Staffing where the youth, parents/guardians, caseworker, clinician, and others meet to put together a treatment plan. Each month, the ECC meets with the youth and TC to review academic progress, address concerns, praise growth, and plan action steps for each youth in preparation for re-entry. The work of the ECC to support a seamless transition is complemented by Regional Education Transition Team Meetings that are convened to review plans for youth transitioning from one program to another and those re-entering the community.

College and Career Readiness Motivational Interview

Newly committed youth are administered the College and Career Readiness Motivational Interview (CCRMI) by the ECC. This tool assesses a youth’s strengths in 10 domains that are correlated with college and career readiness, such as Empower Your Future: Agency; Creating Effective Goals; Positive Beliefs; Workforce Readiness Behaviors; Becoming a Successful Student; Knowing Yourself; Follow Your Interests; Support Networks; Stages of Change; and Strategic Self-Presentation. Last year, 102 youth were administered the CCRMI. Among the 41 who had a posttest, youth improved the most on average by 2.3 points in the domain ‘Becoming a Successful Student.’ Growth in the other five strengths improved between 1.2 and 1.5 points, as shown in the figure below.

PRE TO POST GAINS IN AVERAGE CCRMI SCORES ON STRENGTHS 1-6

N=41

**Planning for Successful Re-entry**

The ECC also has an important role in working with the case management team to prepare for a youth's 90, 60, and 30-day community re-entry meetings. ECCs plan and attend school re-entry meetings and work with the schools to establish the supports that will help the youth to successfully transfer back to their home school.

VII. THE LEAD INITIATIVE

Leadership, Employment, and Advocacy Development (LEAD) is an initiative that supports positive youth development by providing work readiness opportunities and employment in the community. Grantee organizations are part of a support network for youth to learn about and pursue a career pathway of their interest. LEAD provides employability training opportunities as well as real world experiences for youth to practice their self-advocacy and self-awareness skills. Youth build relationships with supportive adults and peers as they gain leadership, employability, and life skills to move into marketable employment.

Youth Participation

LEAD served one hundred seventy-four youth during SY 2019 – 2020** and an additional eleven youth in a Metro program that started later in the year, during the COVID-19 Stay at Home Advisory, for a total of one hundred eighty-five youth. Metro youth are only included in the COVID-19 section.

Youth Participation in Tiered Approach

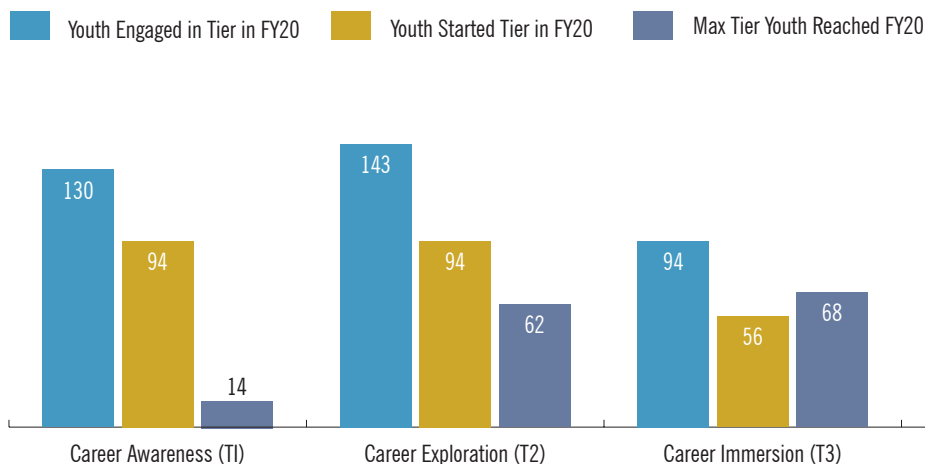
Youth participate in LEAD through a tiered approach of engagement. Tier 1 is career awareness, Tier 2 is career exploration, Tier 3 is career immersion for preparedness, and Tier 4 is career immersion for retention (This tier is optional for youth to receive post-employment support.) The approach is not linear and is designed to meet youth where they are at in their career journey. Youth can be in multiple tiers at the same time.

Youth Attainment

Most youth participating in LEAD are of school age and had yet to achieve an attainment. Of the 174 youth who participated in regular LEAD programming, forty were between the ages of 18 and 19, and one hundred were 18 or younger. Of those who had an attainment by September 2020, 37 had a high school diploma, 31 had a HISET and one youth had a high school certification. In Massachusetts, a high school attainment is an important milestone for entering a career with a living wage and benefits.

YOUTH'S CAREER JOURNEY THROUGH THE TIERED MODEL

Youth served in LEAD FY20 (n=174)

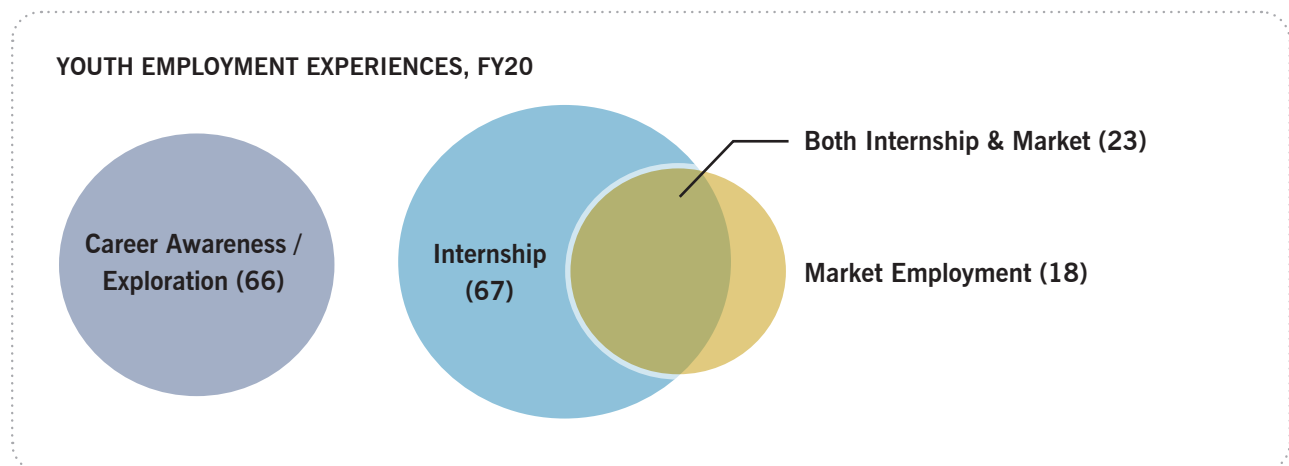


** *LEAD time-frame – July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020.

LEAD YOUTH ATTAINMENT STATUS BY AGE (AS OF SEPTEMBER 2020)								
Attainment Status	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Total
No Attainment	2	18	31	27	18	8	1	105
Attained			6	16	22	20	5	69
Total	2	18	37	43	40	28	6	174

Youth Employment Experiences

The LEAD program is designed to allow youth to receive a variety of field experiences. LEAD provides supports to youth ages 14 – 21. In the following graphs, internship numbers refer to youth who had subsidized employment placements in FY20; market employment numbers refer to youth who started unsubsidized employment in FY20. Out of 174 youth, 108 youth (62%) received an employment experience. Of those 108 youth, 67 youth received an internship; 23 youth received an internship and market employment; and 18 youth received market employment without an internship. The remaining 66 youth worked on career readiness and career preparation activities, such as completing a career interest inventory and creating a portfolio that includes items such as a resume, cover letter, and sample thank you letters for when they participate in a job search and application process. Even though FY20 was a difficult year, most of the youth still received employment experiences as shown in the graph and chart below:



According to labor market data, youth are commonly employed in the service sector. Youth in LEAD were no different. Youth were most often employed in Food Services, with placements at locations such as Dunkin Donuts, Big Al's Pizza Plus, 3 Restaurant, South Side Grill and more. However, youth also had experiences in other industries, such as transportation and warehousing, automotive service technicians and mechanics, educational services, arts, entertainment, and recreation, and health care and social assistance. Placements for those industries included FedEx, USPS Customer Center, Diesel Works, Speedie Oil and Auto Service, the YMCA, Sabis International Charter School, Work Out World, Cardinal Health, Edaron Inc.

Generally, youth with attainments had employment experiences at similar rates as youth without attainments. Youth without an attainment had a higher rate of internships and a higher rate of market employment experiences. In contrast, youth with an attainment had a higher rate of having both internship and market employment experiences. These trends are worth continuing to examine to understand the connections between education attainment status and participation and progress in LEAD programming.

LEAD YOUTH EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE BY ATTAINMENT					
Employment Experience	No Attainment		Attainment		Total
	#	%	#	%	
Both Internship & Market	11	10%	12	17%	23
Market Employment	12	11%	6	9%	18
Internship	42	40%	25	36%	67
Career Awareness / Exploration	40	38%	26	38%	66
Total	105		69		174

COVID-19 Response

On March 13th when the governor announced the stay home advisory, our LEAD grantees adjusted quickly to modify programming. For the 3 months following the start of the COVID-19 public health emergency, LEAD grantees adapted to the challenge by engaging 185 youth through text, phone calls, and zoom meetings and supporting them navigate our “new normal.” The supports provided included:

- Learning remote workplace skills such as screen sharing, and participating in virtual meetings;
- Practicing interview skills including proper attire and receiving feedback;
- Creating and updating resumes, cover letters, and conducting career research;
- Watching TED Talks together and discussing what was learned and how they were helpful;
- Participating in virtual college tours;
- Completing skills assessments on MassHire and CIS, and developing employment goals; and,
- Enrolling in virtual trainings for skills and certifications, such as coding and the National Retail Certification.

Grantees also discussed the pandemic with the youth and how to stay safe during this time. They also shared community resources the youth and families can access to continue to meet their needs.

Impact of COVID-19 on Youth Employment

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly increased Massachusetts' unemployment rates and young adults have been one of the hardest hit groups economically. We saw this in youth employment experiences in LEAD. In March of 2020, forty-two youth lost or lost opportunities for mini-internship, internship, and pre-apprenticeship field placements. In lieu of missed hours and unexpected changes in income during uncertain times, LEAD subsidized youth for hours they would have worked if youth had stayed engaged with grantees and produced a weekly product.

Between March and June, LEAD grantees, following CDC and DPH guidelines, did not place youth in subsidized employment placements. However, there were 16 youth, who, with LEAD support, successfully obtained market employment through other avenues.

Data in JJEMS

During FY20, new data collection and quality assurance procedures were initiated with redefined roles and responsibilities for data entry and quality data. Through the cross-disciplinary efforts of the DYS Research and Reporting Teams, the CES Senior Research and Evaluation Specialist, and the CommCorp Research and Evaluation Manager, LEAD data are now entered directly in JJEMS (the DYS youth centered information system) and analyzed through the LEAD reports under development.

VIII. COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS: EMPOWER YOUR FUTURE

The Empower Your Future (EYF) initiative is aimed at maximizing youth development by focusing on success and empowerment for youth to identify and reach their goals. EYF is supported by a curriculum that strengthens the youth's voice and develops their academic, technical, workplace readiness, and social competencies as outlined [here](https://www.masshiremsw.com/wp-content/uploads/Career-Development-Guide-Glossary-DESE.pdf) (<https://www.masshiremsw.com/wp-content/uploads/Career-Development-Guide-Glossary-DESE.pdf>) in the Massachusetts Career Development Benchmarks.

The EYF initiative has undergone significant program development efforts in FY20. While the pilot of the revised curriculum and tools had to be delayed because of the COVID-19 public health emergency, the time was used to complete all curriculum revisions and refine the implementation.

The revised Empower Your Future Curriculum is centered on 5 core competencies:

- Financial Literacy
- Life Skills
- Career and Education Exploration and Action Planning
- Postsecondary and Workplace Skills
- Advocacy

Once per week, clinicians and EYF teachers collaborate in the educational setting to integrate DBT skills into the EYF class experience as part of the skill set that youth will use when they return to the community.

IX. RESIDENTIAL WORK PROGRAMS

Our work programs in DYS residential facilities provide youth with a hands-on opportunity to gain workplace skills, build self-confidence, and set goals for future success in employment.

With the success of our existing work programs, Exclusive Tees, and Sandobo's Kitchen (outlined below), an extensive manual of work program components, procedures, and best practices was developed. This framework was utilized to expand work program offerings to include culinary programming to two additional cohorts on the Tinkham Rd. Campus; to add a jobs component to the Carpentry Program in Middleton; to offer woodworking, maintenance, and culinary programming at STRIVE in Northeast; and to begin paid maintenance programming in Metro.

In addition to a hands-on work experience, DYS' work programs utilize:

- An Advisory Team consisting of representatives from the program, facility, and region in which the work program operates to carry program development and continued operations;
- Activities and instruction rooted in Positive Youth Development that allow for non-standards-based teachable moments to be integrated into daily work, and provide consistent employability skill development during participation where
 - Instructors are both industry professionals and youth coaches
 - Youth expectations are high, but youth are coached in a supportive environment allowing them to make mistakes and learn from them
 - Daily verbal feedback is given to youth for constant skill development;
- A structured onboarding process that allows youth to learn how to complete an I-9 and tax forms, learn about typical workplace expectations, and open a bank account with direct deposit; and
- Regular check-ins and/or performance evaluations to help ensure youth develop technical and soft skills as well as aid in their comfort speaking professionally about their skills.

Exclusive Tees

[Exclusive Tees, www.exclusivetees.org](http://www.exclusivetees.org), a custom screen-printing social enterprise, was developed in Springfield in 2013 and has since expanded to a second location in Taunton. This program employs youth to work together to fulfill custom screen-printing orders for the public and is the only current program with a sales component. Exclusive Tees is guided by customer orders so that real-world scenarios guide learning experiences. The success of the business ensures that the shops have a high volume of work for youth to experience the demands of the workplace.

Each Exclusive Tees shop operates for three hours after school twice a week (six hours per week). Youth must be at least 16 years old and plan to be at the facility a minimum of three months after hire to ensure they can gain skills within the program. Each facility has set expectations for youth participation in clinical, school, and on the unit, and youth must meet these expectations before they may be considered for referral.

ITEMS PRINTED BY MONTH		
Month	FY19	FY20
July	349	517
August	507	454
September	337	82
October	174	265
November	809	436
December	150	433
January	75	224
February	151	929
March	1273	12 (COVID-19)
April	404	10 (COVID-19)
May	2425	15 (COVID-19)
June	893	447 (COVID-19)
Total	7547	3824 (-49%)

SALES BY MONTH		
Month	FY19	FY20
July	\$2,987.55	\$4,250.72
August	\$4,927.62	\$3,749.95
September	\$3,121.55	\$1,446.22
October	\$2,146.21	\$2,869.59
November	\$6,452.03	\$3,427.03
December	\$1,845.52	\$5,876.96
January	\$876.89	\$2,478.06
February	\$1,316.31	\$8,223.65
March	\$9,180.08	\$368.62 (COVID-19)
April	\$7,912.40	\$214.86 (COVID-19)
May	\$15,422.52	\$198.25 (COVID-19)
June	\$5,212.31	\$3,956.39 (COVID-19)
Total	\$58,400.99	\$37,060.30 (-33%)

The Exclusive Tees shop in Springfield continued to operate with no disruption due to COVID-19. The program in Taunton resumed after a short break, just after July 1, 2020. During this time, the participating youth took on more responsibility because fewer youth were being committed to DYS during COVID-19. Youth needed to fulfill multiple roles in the process while practicing high-level time management and communication skills to fill orders and meet deadlines. With the increased sense of obligation, youth were reported to be more responsible, more engaged, and prouder of their work and team. Three youth earned a nationally recognized certificate from the American Screen Printing Association.

Sandobo's Kitchen

In 2016, Sandobo's Kitchen was created in Springfield to provide youth with experience in a high demand industry. Youth are introduced to culinary basics as well as how to safely work within a professional kitchen. Upon completion of instruction, youth sit for the ServSafe Manager exam and then may interview for positions at the campus cafeteria to aid kitchen staff in preparing meals and performing daily tasks. Four youth earned their ServSafe Manager certification in FY20.



Youth employed at Sandobo's Kitchen prepare and serve food at a special function.

Exclusive Kitchens

Three new Exclusive Kitchens culinary ventures were in operation this year, employing two youth from a residential program in the Northeast Region, two at Terri Thomas and two assessment youth placed in the Western Region. These programs allowed youth to work alongside the kitchen staff to prepare meals and perform daily tasks.

Maintenance Programming

A residential program in the Metro Region and another in the Northeast Region began offering maintenance employment opportunities for youth in FY20. Each program employed two youth. After being trained on how to use a variety of indoor and outdoor maintenance equipment, and learning tasks such as painting, buffing, stripping and waxing, lawn care, and snow removal, youth worked independently to accomplish these tasks across each campus.

X. THE DYS ARTS INITIATIVE

Artist Residencies

Sixteen (16) full arts residencies ran between July 2019 – February 2020, engaging 17 teaching artists to work in 15 residential programs. Each engagement was for between 5 – 12 weeks. The youth participated in individual and group artmaking that included drumming, theater (improvisational and Shakespeare), Hip Hop, music production, lyric writing and recording, lyrical analysis, stepping, and poetry/original writing.

Eleven additional residencies were planned for Spring 2020; eight of which had already begun when the COVID-19 Stay at Home Advisory came into effect and had to be suspended.

In June 2020, Actors' Shakespeare Project was the first arts organization to provide virtual arts programming as a result of COVID-19 response planning to youth in a residential program in the Northeast region. The youth participated in a month-long, pilot engagement in theater.

Arts Internships and Community Offerings

Community-based DYS youth were provided with arts programming throughout the year that included:

- One-on-one mentorship from Hip Hop artist Harrison Grigsby;
- Actors' Shakespeare Project's Summer Youth Intensive 2019, with youth acting in a full-length production of *The Tempest*;
- The Performance Project's *First Generation* program with youth participating in 2 weeks of intensive dance and theater training at the School for Contemporary Dance and Thought in Northampton;
- Youth step dance program based at the Randolph District Office; and
- Everett Company Stage and School working with youth on autobiographical storytelling and original writing.

Other Arts Highlights

- **Everett Company Stage and School:** As part of Everett's community work with DYS Metro youth, one young man shared his original writing and co-facilitated a workshop at DYS's 'Addressing Racial Trauma' Professional Development day in January 2020.
- **DA Project:** The Suffolk County District Attorney, Rachel Rollins, commissioned DYS youth to create large-scale art for her offices in Boston. A young man from the SE created a triptych entitled 'Justice'. This project was coordinated by DYS and Commonwealth Corporation, with onsite visual arts instruction from Aneeka Cheema, the SE Visual Arts Instructor with the Collaborative for Educational Services (see below).



- **Commissioner Awards:** Two youth performed at the 2019 Commissioner Awards, held at the Metro Youth Service Center in October 2019. A Metro Region youth performed an original rap, and a Western Region youth performed a modern dance.
- **NE music studio:** The culmination of several years of planning, a 'mobile' music studio was completed for the Middleton campus in the Northeast region. Featuring 3 computers loaded with Ableton Live software, the studio hosts recording, beat-making, and DJ sessions. The Arts Program Manager, teaching artist Craig Lawrence and the staff of the NE Youth Service Center established protocols and use agreements for studio use during out of school hours. Additional mobile studios are to be introduced to four additional regions in 2021.

XI. FAMILY AND/OR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The DYS Strategic Plan establishes the goal of increasing family and/or caregiver engagement. By successfully involving families with their child's treatment and education at DYS, we believe our youth will be more likely to make progress in attaining their future goals. The successes this past year include:

Open Houses and Parent-Teacher Conferences

Programs throughout the state work with education staff to host events that showcase the comprehensive education programming underway in DYS. They provide opportunities for families to meet teachers, review the academic and career development of their child and, whenever possible, hear directly from the youth about their college and career development. Some highlights include:

RFK Girls Treatment held an Open House for education staff to present on education programming and special projects. Additionally, there was a youth performance of "Reclaiming my Time," that celebrated the arts residency with Enchanted Circle Theatre Company. Youth performed for family and guests with everyone enjoying a meal together afterwards.

Springfield Residential Treatment held a Model United Nations event with families and DYS guests. Youth selected a country to represent and presented on how sports can help lower crime and poverty in their selected country. This presentation was followed by a mock debate on the creation of international leagues to help reduce violence through sports. The families, DYS guests and youth then enjoyed a meal with international food from various countries.

Programs on the **Westfield Campus** held a campus wide open house for families and friends that showcased youths' projects and presentations, along with presentations by teachers on the vocational and educational programming going on across the campus (e.g. Virtual Welding, Music Recording Room, C-Tech kits, Horticulture flower arrangements, and Historical building models). A sit-down meal was provided afterwards for families, youth, and guests.

Community Adolescent Treatment Program (CATP) held a Thanksgiving luncheon for youths, parents, and guests. The youth gave flowers to the attendees for the Holiday. The flowers were the products of an experiment the youth conducted in science class on the water cycle. CATP also held a Holiday luncheon for students' parents and guests. One group of students put on a play, "The Grinch that Stole Christmas" and everyone enjoyed it. All youth made a holiday table centerpiece for each guest in their Horticulture program.

Judge J. Connelly teachers, program staff and administration, youth, and parents/guardians held a potluck dinner. Teachers met with parents/guardians, sharing youths' successes in school, and discussing upcoming plans.

Eliot Boys Detention held a Parent/Teacher night with education staff providing parents with information on how credits transfer when youth return home and what their current daily schedules are. Families were pleased to learn that their children attended full school days while in detention. Education staff assured parents that youth would have access to MCAS prep and testing, special education services, and electives. Youth showcased their academic work by sharing their binders with their families.

Suffolk Detention held a combined holiday family event with both program and education staff participating. The event was promoted as an opportunity for parents to “get to know your child’s teachers.” The event was well attended by families and the educators had the opportunity to share student successes and progress as well as chat with parents about what they thought were the best ways for their children to access curriculum effectively.

Commonwealth Secure Detention held two events in one day! The afternoon started with an intimate graduation ceremony for a recent HiSET® graduate. Many educators, program, and community staff spoke at the graduation and the youth’s family was grateful to have this experience just one week before he moved on to the adult system. This event was immediately followed by a second event, a Family Dinner which was highlighted by the youth showcasing the DJ skills they learned during their Arts Residency with the Change the Play program. They had worked hard in rehearsal and loved putting on display their DJ skills as well as the song they had created to promote their collaboratively created product – a hoodie sweatshirt with a logo designed by students. The youth excitedly distributed the sweatshirts to family, teachers, and program staff during the event.

Brockton Revocation/Reception education, clinical and program staff coordinated a Family Game Day event. The event began with the teachers facilitating the Breakout EDU puzzle game. This was followed by more games, including a game in EYF and Math, the History of Games with chess, and Mancala. The event provided a casual setting for teachers, youth, and families to get to know one another.

Southeast Secure Detention hosted a family paint night facilitated by the regional art teacher. Other members of the education team joined in creating paintings using stencils and free hand pieces. Families and other guests were given a guided tour of the school wing of the program. The program had also hosted their first “Grill and Chill” event which had to be held indoors and two special events with Everett Stage and Company where the youth, teachers and staff displayed the improvisation skills they learned during the arts residency.

Southeast Secure Treatment hosted “A Community Mixed Tape” and family dinner to celebrate the art residency with artist Harrison Grigsby. The youth presented musical creations to guests. Teachers met with parents and invited guests in the classrooms and shared updates on students’ progress. A caseworker set up a picture booth with backdrops and props where youth, families, staff, and teachers could take holiday photos together. At the conclusion of the event, scholastic books for preschool and elementary age visitors were handed out by the teachers for the young visitors to take home.

Nauset Academy held an event in partnership with Cotuit Center for the Arts. Cotuit worked with youth on several projects during the fall including a large group art piece and music projects. The event gave youth the opportunity to share their art experience as well as present their artwork.

Robert F. Kennedy School in the Northeast region held a “Harvest Family Night” for families to meet with and talk to teachers about academic programming offered at RFK and the academic pursuits of their child.

Worcester Secure hosted an annual Cultural Awareness luncheon. For the week leading up to the event, youth worked on posters depicting their heritage. They created poems in ELA, masks in art, and did research on their heritage in history class. On the day of the event, staff and their parents brought cultural dishes that everyone shared while giving thanks for the year. The youth were extremely proud of their posters and spent extra time showing off their work to their parents between plates of food.

Graduation Ceremonies

Historically, all five regions host an end of year graduation ceremony to celebrate those youth who have successfully attained their High School Diploma or its equivalent (HiSET®). This year, due to the pandemic, each region developed highly personalized methods for marking this transformative milestone. Below are highlights from each region:

Western Region: Refusing to let COVID-19 prevent graduates from celebrating this important milestone, the Western Region held a “Rolling Graduation.” Each District Office held a day of celebrations for the students who graduated. Caseworkers, District Managers, ECCs, A/RECs, community outreach personnel and other caring adults drove to students’ homes with the caps and gowns, diplomas/certificates, graduation gifts and a professional photographer to celebrate with the youth and their families, while maintaining appropriate social distancing. Pictures were taken of graduates with their families and with others from the parade group. Each youth received a framed photograph of the picture taken by the photographer.

Metro Region: Metro did not let the difficulties presented by the COVID-19 virus prevent the celebration of a major life achievement by our youth. Seven youth attained a diploma or HiSET® this school year and the region could not be prouder of their accomplishment. Youth who were in residence in Metro at the time of their graduation had a personal individualized graduation ceremony that was attended by their families and other significant individuals in their lives. Each ceremony included a celebratory meal and cake, along with a march to the dais to Pomp and Circumstance. There were speeches by program directors, educators, community members, and the youth themselves. Each ceremony was a lively celebration of the youth’s perseverance and dedication to their advancement. For the Metro youth who were in residence in another region at the time of their graduation, they were celebrated in their programs with ECCs and caseworkers adding their voices to the joyful noise. Youth who were in the community at graduation time were individually celebrated by their district office and presented personalized gifts by their caseworkers. All graduates in Metro also received a graduation certificate at their ceremony.

Southeast Region: The Class of 2020 will certainly have a story to share in the future. During the global pandemic, the Southeast Region had many students working towards their high school credential and graduation plans had to be changed due to COVID-19. A region wide gathering to honor our graduates was not possible. The Southeast Region opted instead to celebrate each student individually. The sixteen graduates received a congratulatory video created by Education & Career Counselors, Caseworkers, and other support staff from their respective District Offices, a cap & gown and a personal gift.

Central Region: This year, the Central Region celebrated the fifteen graduates with their families through socially distanced virtual gatherings with the district offices and, in some cases, programs on a rolling basis. Each graduate received a personal gift that could be used to celebrate with their families. Many graduates were also able to participate in either virtual or socially distant graduation ceremonies with their graduating school districts.

Northeast Region: A global pandemic did not prevent the Northeast Regional Team from celebrating and honoring the Northeast graduating class of 2020. A graduation ceremony was held outside in the courtyard at the Northeast Youth Services Center with social distancing. All nine graduates from two programs were dressed in caps and gowns and received certificates, graduation gifts and words of commendation from keynote speakers. All families were able to join virtually using FaceTime to watch their graduates receive their diploma and interact with them virtually on this momentous occasion. Youth in the community were celebrated with personalized drive by parades.

Academic Growth Reports

The Future Ready Academic Growth Report, DYS' version of a more meaningful and differentiated report card, was launched and is now operational across all regions. The report is issued quarterly with data information tailored to provide personalized feedback on youth progress across the multiple concentrations of study (High School Diploma or equivalent, College, and Career). This growth report is reviewed at treatment meetings and highlights a youth's academic progress and development of future ready skills deemed essential for success in work, school and in life. The treatment meetings are attended by caseworkers, clinicians, program staff, family members, and other caring adults.

College and Career Fairs

College and Career Fairs that are historically held in the Spring and facilitated by the ECCs were suspended due to COVID-19. Instead, the ECCs facilitated and organized a speaker series for youth in DYS residential programs that included virtual college and career fairs. In SY 2019-2020:

- Fourteen community and pass eligible youth attended career fairs at the Northern Essex Community College and at the Lawrence YMCA.
- Fourteen community youth toured four different vocational schools: New England Tractor Trailer School, New England Institute of HVAC, New England Hair Academy and The Peterson School.
- Five students toured three local community colleges.
- Six youth attended a Job Corp presentation at a DYS residential program. Three of the youth completed an application and one was accepted to Job Corp.
- Six DYS district offices arranged for participation in the MassHire online virtual job fairs that were highly attended by both youth and caring adults.

XII. CONCLUSION

Overall, DYS youth were able to make significant strides towards their academic and personal goals with the support of our educational services working in collaboration with other caring adults across the continuum. Our youth benefited from the smaller class sizes, received personalized instruction and had opportunities to explore college and vocational pathways. Moving forward, DYS seeks to enhance its support students in their attainment goals outside in the community as well as while in residence. We will continue to expand resources that will support our English Language Learners and will hire a Detention Specialist to support smoother transitions for detained students. We will expand our use of technology and other research based successful practices and will continue to provide educational services that are culturally responsive and that meet the varied needs of our youth.



Artwork from the Youth Showcase entitled "Sticky Color."



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