



# Oregon Youth Authority

Issue Brief

January 2015

## Education services for youth in OYA close custody

**10**

Number of OYA close-custody facilities

**650**

Approximate number of youth offenders OYA supervises in close custody

**550**

Approximate number of youth offenders OYA supervises in community residential treatment and foster care settings

**450**

Approximate number of youth offenders OYA supervises who live independently or at home in communities

**323**

Total Funds, in millions of dollars, allocated to OYA in 2013-2015

**88**

Approximate percent of OYA's budget spent locally in facilities and communities

### Overview

- ▲ All youth offenders in close custody are required to enroll in classroom or vocational education programs.
- ▲ The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) is responsible for overseeing classroom instruction for all youth in close custody until age 21 who have not received a high school diploma or GED.
- ▲ The Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) is responsible for providing vocational education opportunities for youth in close custody.
- ▲ OYA also offers online college-level courses for youth in close custody.

### Education as a means to reduce recidivism

Research shows the most effective means of reducing the risk of a youth reoffending is to provide the appropriate combination of treatment and education services. All youth in OYA's close-custody facilities receive classroom and/or vocational education services customized to their ages and educational needs.

OYA supports the benefits of education and encourages all youth offenders to gain high school diplomas or GEDs. Once those goals have been achieved, youth are encouraged to take online college-level classes and vocational education training.

OYA has five goals for educating youth in close custody:

- ▲ Provide a standards-based individualized education for each youth.
- ▲ Provide educational services in a safe, secure, and healthy environment.
- ▲ Support programs that prepare youth for successful community living.
- ▲ Encourage education programs that focus on strategies to reduce risk factors that contribute to recidivism.
- ▲ Encourage collaboration among all partners involved in serving youth in OYA facilities – the youth themselves, their parents and/or guardians, ODE, education service districts and school districts, community colleges, local employers, and other organizations and agencies as appropriate.

## Oregon

### Youth Authority

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### Mission

The Oregon Youth Authority protects the public and reduces crime by holding youth offenders accountable and providing opportunities for reformation in safe environments.



### Vision

Youth who leave OYA will go on to lead productive, crime-free lives.



### Core Values

Integrity  
Professionalism  
Accountability  
Respect



### Director

Fariborz Pakseresht



### Deputy Director

Joe O'Leary



### Key Service Areas

Business Services  
Community Services  
Facility Services  
Health Services  
Information Services  
Treatment Services

## Classroom education

ODE oversees classroom education for youth in close custody by contracting with local education service districts and/or school districts to provide a classroom education that meets state education requirements.

All schools at OYA's close-custody facilities meet state educational standards for accreditation. In addition, ODE is required by statute to provide an annual school year for youth offenders consisting of a minimum 220 days of actual classroom instruction.

All course work needed to graduate is available to all youth. Not every required course is offered every quarter, but all required courses are offered at some point during the school year. Class schedules are developed based on the credits needed by each youth.

Most youth come to OYA with high school credits far below the number of credits they would be expected to have earned based on their age. As a result, the majority of youth work on credit recovery. Each youth works with a case manager and other staff members to ensure a written plan is in place that describes credits earned and credits needed.

Dual credit classes are available that offer high school and college credit. Online college courses also are offered, giving youth the opportunity to be exposed to college course content and earn degrees.

## Vocational education

Work experience is a valuable tool in helping youth be well prepared to return to their communities and successfully transition to productive, crime-free lives.

OYA provides work experience through projects led by staff, contracts with outside consultants, and partnerships with volunteers. These opportunities allow youth to learn job skills and earn certifications that help them be job-ready when they leave OYA.

By providing vocational education, OYA helps youth pursue their interests and develop their skills for career planning. Youth also learn the importance of attendance, punctuality, collaboration, problem-solving, and other general behavioral skills employers want in their workforce.

Agency staff, contractors, and volunteers strive to offer a range of career and transition opportunities. Vocational education opportunities include horticulture, culinary skills, plumbing, painting, and welding and electrical work. OYA also promotes skills in emerging fields such as wind and solar power.

## Education outcomes for youth in close custody during 2013

- ▲ 123 youth earned high school diplomas
- ▲ 120 youth earned professional certifications
- ▲ 44 youth earned GEDs
- ▲ 4 youth earned 2-year associate degrees
- ▲ 1 youth earned a 4-year undergraduate degree