

Yuma County
Juvenile Justice Center



Detention Education Program

Suman Pangasa

Our Vision

➤ Every student can learn, just not on the same day, or the same way.

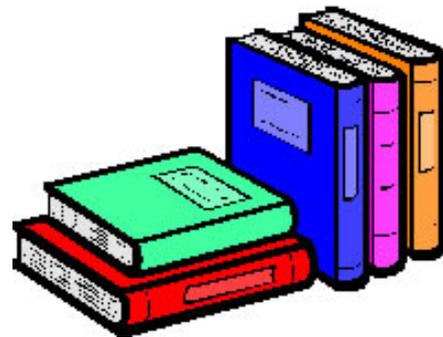


➤ George Evans

School Improvement Plan

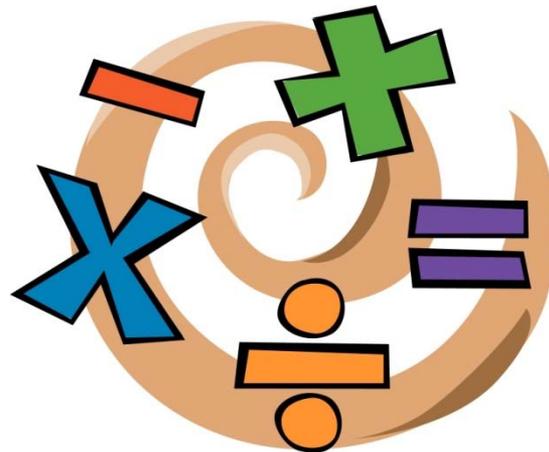
Goals, Progress, and Challenges

➔ 2009 – 2010 Academic Year



GOAL 1

**To increase student achievement in
Math and Language Arts**



Progress on Goal 1

- 638 students received 5 hours of daily instruction
- The average daily school attendance was 46.5 students
- All students were pre-assessed in both reading and math
- NCE and A+ programs were used to provide instruction based on the students' needs
- Weekly review of academic progress was done by the education staff

Progress continued

- 74 students attended 30 or more consecutive days of school
- An average gain of 2.1 semesters in reading
- An average gain of 1.98 semesters in math

Breakdown of student data

- # of students served: 638
- # with special needs: 37
- # of school days: 233
- Average length of stay: 12.5 days
- Average daily attendance: 46.5

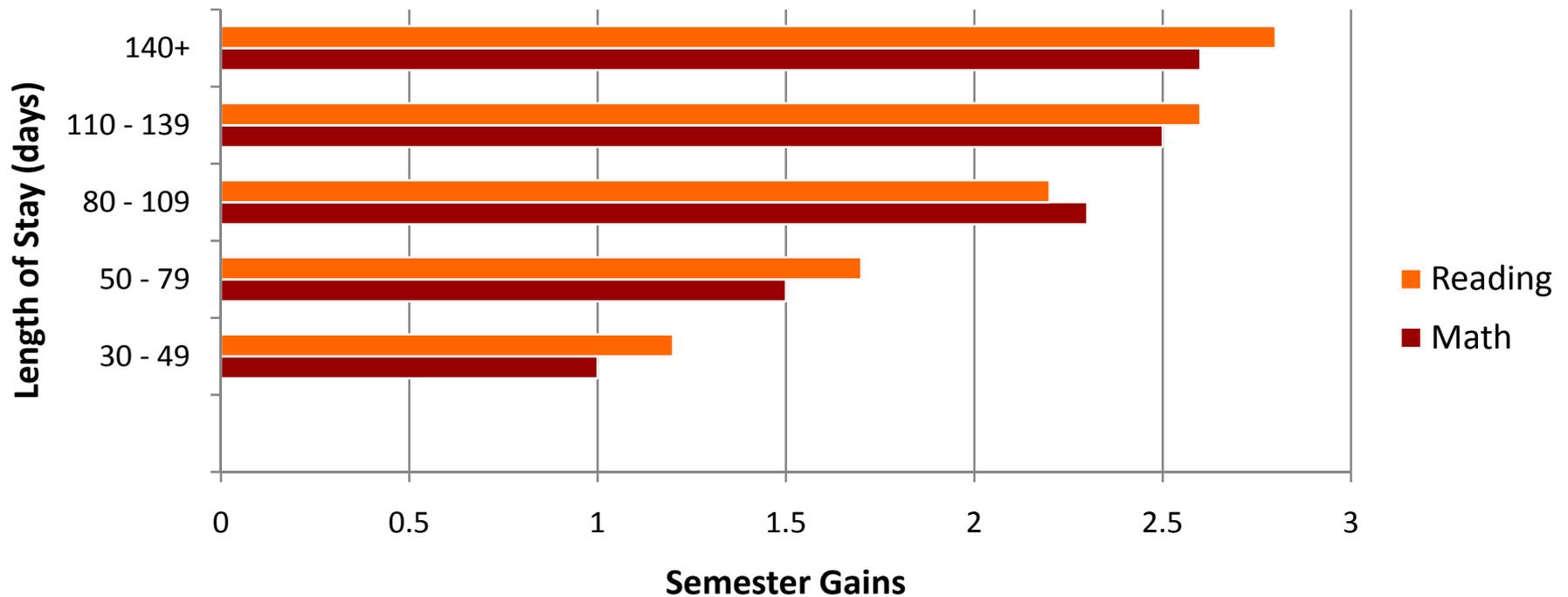
Breakdown of student achievement

- # with length of stay over 30 days: 74
- # of students earned GED: 14
- # of students earned HS diploma: 2
- # of students earned 8th grade Diploma: 1
- # of credits earned : 110

Breakdown of students by the length of stay

Days	Number of Students
30- 49	35
50- 79	18
80- 109	11
110- 139	6
140-179	4

Gains based on Length of Stay



➔ Sample only includes students working on the NCE program

Program Challenges

- Wide range of student abilities and grade levels
- Short-term of detainee incarceration
- Uncertainty of stay duration due to court-related issues
- Problem of keeping continuity with the home schools
- Lack of parental involvement

GOAL 2

Ensure that juveniles in the detention center receive quality instruction in life/transitional skills to enable them to return to the community with the tools for success

Progress on Goal 2

- All eligible students received Life Skills instruction for one hour/day
- Several students earned Life Skills credit
- New Step-Up program aimed at restorative justice was implemented
- Vocational screening & aptitude tests conducted
- Transition portfolios developed

A Thought

➤ If you are planning for a year, sow rice; if you are planning for a decade, plant trees; if you are planning for a lifetime, educate people

➤ Chinese Proverb

EXECUTIVE INSTITUTIONAL SUMMARY

Yuma County Juvenile Detention School Customer Number: 218065

2440 West 28th Street
Yuma, Arizona 85364 US

Mr. Leo Mendez

Arizona Supreme Court

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REPORT INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Your ASSIST-Generated Executive Institutional Summary

The Adaptive System of School Improvement Support Tools (ASSIST) is a new, state-of-the-art alternative that allows schools to streamline and enhance their efforts to boost student achievement. Using ASSIST, a school can gain a better understanding of its past successes and opportunities and confidently build a solid, research-based plan for the future.

Every school has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and student learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way school leadership considers how to organize, maintain order, and stay faithful to the school's vision. A description of the level of stakeholder engagement, trends and issues affecting the school, and the kinds of programs and services that the school implements to support student learning also contributes to the overall narrative.

The purpose of the Executive Institutional Summary (EIS) is to give schools an opportunity to tell their story, to describe their context both strengths and challenges so that the public and members of the school community have a more complete picture of how the school perceives itself and what it is deliberating as it engages in the process of self-reflection for continuous improvement.

This report is structured into 4 sections that give context about what the school faces on a day-to-day basis in providing teaching and learning in its community:

Section 1: Introduction

- Describes the community in which the school is located. Identifies the unique features and special challenges of this school community. Provides brief demographic information with regards to both students and staff and the community at large.

Section 2: Student Performance

- Gives a brief description of the school's vision about students and their performance.
- Provides a brief summary of student performance in this school. Identifies the school's goals and how the school will know they have achieved them. Describes the variety of the school's student performance assessments. Identifies how the staff engages in meaningful analysis of student work in order to modify instruction.
- Describes the school's student support programs and services. Identifies the ways in which the school ensures community/parent involvement in the life of the school.

Section 3: Challenges and Opportunities

- Identifies the major challenges the school has faced in the last 3 years and how it has addressed those challenges.

Section 4: Conclusion

- Identifies what the school is most proud of and why.
- Relates other information the school would like to share with the public and the school community.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Institution

District	Arizona Supreme Court
Country	US
State/Province	AZ
City	Yuma
Governance	Public, non-charter
Setting	
Type	Supplementary School
Grade(s)	
Religious Denomination	
Gender	
Enrollment	1365

Contact

Head of Institution	Mr. Leo Mendez
Phone	
Email	leme@courts.az.gov
Address	2440 West 28th Street Yuma, Arizona 85364

EXECUTIVE INSTITUTIONAL SUMMARY

Section 1: Introduction

Describe the community in which your school is located. What are the unique features and special challenges of your school community?

Briefly provide demographic information with regards to both students and staff and the community at large.

Narrative:

The Detention Education Program of the Yuma County Juvenile Justice Center provides educational and transitional services to the detained youth of Yuma and La Paz counties. A small rural community in the southwestern region of Arizona, Yuma County has a total population of 190,567 based on 2009 statistics of the US Census Bureau. Yuma faces significant challenges arising from its high poverty, and unemployment rates, both of which exceed the national average. According to the 2009 statistics Yuma had 21.5 % of people living below the poverty line and the unemployment rate in Yuma was 27.5 % based on numbers from May 2010. Approximately 29 % of Yuma's population is below the age of eighteen. Along with these socio-economic factors, the cultural climate created by Yuma's shared border with Mexico plays a prevalent role in schools throughout the county.

The school operates on a year round schedule with a minimum 225 days a year as a mandated requirement. Mandate also requires four hours of daily instruction, but to maximize student learning, the Detention Education Program provides a minimum of five hours daily with an additional hour of AIMS tutoring when possible. The program regularly serves between 600 – 900 students throughout the year. Daily attendance ranges from 40 to 60 students and the average length of stay for students in detention is 11.6 days.

The program operates in a secure care setting where student's movements are restricted. Classes are held in the individual "pods" with the teachers moving from class to class, rather than the students changing classes. Computer classes are held in one of three computer laboratories that are adjacent to the pods. The program is thoroughly structured and provides an individualized education program to each student based on his or her unique needs.

The school staff consists of one special education certified Program Manager, three certified/highly qualified teachers, and two highly qualified paraprofessionals. Additionally, the school employs a highly qualified transition coordinator who helps students with vocational screening, career planning, and overall transition back to the community. Several of the education program members are bilingual in Spanish/English, thus able to meet the needs of those students that are monolingual.

Section 2: Student Performance

Give a brief description of your school's vision about students and their performance. Provide a brief summary of student performance in your school. What are your goals and how will you know you have achieved them?

Describe the variety of your school's student performance assessments. How does your staff engage in meaningful analysis of student work in order to modify instruction?

Describe the school's student support programs and services. In what ways does your school ensure community/parent involvement in the life of the school?

Narrative:

Student Performance

The Detention Education Program of the Yuma County Juvenile Court has a clear vision and purpose that is evident through all aspects of its daily operations. The vision of the school dictates that every student can and will learn. The program ensures that all students achieve academic, social, and career success by providing individualized instruction and life skills training to help them attain their individual academic goals and a seamless transition back to the community.

The effectiveness of our program can be measured by how well we assess the needs and abilities of our students. To ensure that the education plan for our students is based on proper assessments, education records for all incoming students are requested from their school of last attendance within 48 hours of being enrolled in the Detention Education Program. A diagnostic assessment in reading and math is also given to every incoming student within 48 hours of enrollment. The education staff team reviews the assessment results and the students' transcripts to develop an individualized education plan for every student.

Besides the diagnostic assessments the curriculum used by the school also entails pre and post assessments. Teachers also use formative assessments throughout the courses to assess learning. The school prepares an annual school improvement plan based on review of the previous year's assessment data. The students also participate in all state wide assessments including AIMS and Terra-Nova tests.

Another important contributor to student learning is the teacher's ability to apply the principles of differentiated instruction to teaching. All our teachers have received training in differentiated instruction and behavior management. Our class sizes are very small with a teacher student ratio of 1 to 8 that allows the teacher to differentiate with relative ease.

Communication with stake holders is a continuous ongoing effort and also the key to program improvement through meaningful feedback. Our constructive efforts at having open communication with the probation and other court staff as well as the parents of the detained youth have often produced positive outcomes for student achievements.

Section 3: Challenges and Opportunities

What are the major challenges your school has faced in the last 3 years and how have you addressed those challenges?

Narrative:

The Detention Education Program at the Yuma County Juvenile Court faces several challenges while trying to provide the best quality of education for its students. Foremost among these challenges is providing continuity in student education in spite of uncertainty regarding the duration of students' stays (affected by several court decisions); the average length of stay in detention for a student is 12.5 days. Several students however stay for over 30 days with a very small number staying for an extended period of over 100 days. Many times the length of stay is unknown at the beginning and remains uncertain for a variety of court related procedures. This makes it very challenging for the education staff to develop an education plan. This also makes it imperative to get the stakeholders involved in the program.

Several of our students come from broken families and there is complete lack of parental involvement in their education. This becomes a challenge to the education staff because it impacts the students' motivational level. Getting the parents involved in the decisions regarding their child's education is important and an extremely difficult task. We have been trying various ways to have parents' participation. Some of the efforts include monthly parent orientation meetings, brochures about the education program available in the front lobby of the Detention center, getting probation's help in bringing the parents to meetings and having flexible meeting times to allow parents a chance to attend meetings.

Some of the other challenges include students lack of motivation, lack of long term goals and life style choices. Many of these students have not experienced success in their educational career. They fear failure and do not want to try yet another time. We ensure that students are pre-assessed and provide lesson path based on their diagnostic assessment. To ensure continued involvement and improve motivation we provide them opportunities to succeed. We focus on small gains and our teachers provide immediate and frequent feedback. We help students develop their transition portfolios based on vocational screening and aptitude tests. This long-term goal planning provides them with a road map. Also, our Life-skills classes provide opportunities of learning about important skills of decision making. The curriculum works at cognitive restructuring to help students review their own choices about life.

Above all, our staff is well trained, and participates in ongoing professional development because working with court involved, at-risk youth is a challenge that requires professionals with a sense of commitment.

Section 4: Conclusion

What is your school most proud of and why?

Is there any other information you would like to share with the public and the school community?

Narrative:

The Detention Education Program at the Yuma County Juvenile Court is incredibly proud of its ongoing accomplishments. Students come to this school facing several challenges and failures, and the staff's total commitment to student learning instills a new sense of motivation in them. The school takes pride in the fact that each student is given an individualized education/transition plan that is regularly reviewed and revised by the educational staff based on student needs and progress.

To ensure continuity of educational services for students detained on a short-term basis, the education staff has forged several collaborations with various stakeholders in the community. Regular meetings are held with the local school superintendents, principals, and teachers to explore methods of providing continuity to students who oscillate between attendance in Detention and public schools. Among the solutions to overcome this challenge, the A+ education program, which is used by local high schools, has been purchased and utilized for Detention Education Program students. This computer based program offers courses in a variety of subjects and the curriculum is aligned with the Arizona state standards. Several students have been able to earn high school credits using this curriculum.

Besides the computer based learning our students also receive direct instruction from a team of highly qualified teachers. The Life Skills education our students receive helps in cognitive restructuring and transition back to the community.

Our collaborations with the other court departments have been instrumental in our students' success. The detention staff of the court have helped us provide a safe learning environment for our students. We are also proud of our continued collaborative relationship with the probation department. Our ongoing interactions with the probation staff provides feedback on students needs and achievements which is crucial in developing specific and realistic education plans. It also improves students motivation level knowing the involvement of caring adults in their lives.

The school also has an intensive GED program for students who are unlikely to graduate with a regular high school diploma. This program begins with a pre-GED screening test, followed by intensive intervention, and ending with completion of the GED test. Within the context of this program, several students over the years have received their GED diploma, twenty of which were within the last year alone. Several others are currently working towards the same goal.

The education staff genuinely cares about the students and their educational progress and believe that recidivism rates drop when youth are adequately educated to ensure future success in their chosen careers.