

October 1, 2000

The Honorable Jim Hodges,
Governor of South Carolina
Members of the General Assembly
State of South Carolina
Columbia, South Carolina

Dear Governor Hodges:

I have the honor to transmit herewith to you the Fiscal Year 1999-2000 Annual Accountability Report of the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School. This report covers the period from July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000.

The mission of the Opportunity School has been one that has adapted itself to meet the critical educational needs of the day. This flexibility has been our strength and has enabled us to focus on the immediate short term. Our mission as an alternative setting was adopted years ago to educate students to enhance employability and meet changing statewide needs.

Program objectives and performance measures are related to our mission of designing an individual educational plan for each student. The effectiveness of program objectives is measurable in many instances, while other successes, as in Residential Services, are not as tangible. Each measurement and objective was selected based upon the impact on student service delivery and as a means to improve the quality of that delivery.

As an agency, the Opportunity School has long been concerned with the welfare of the state's youth and the realization of their potential to contribute productively to the welfare of South Carolina. The school has been a cost-effective enterprise for the state throughout its history. As this report indicates, significant work is accomplished for relatively low cost. Every graduate we contribute to the work force returns to our economy many times the investment the state has made in them through the Opportunity School. We look forward to working with you and the legislature toward another productive year in 2000-2001.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat G. Smith
Director

PGS/hcs
Enclosure

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For more than seventy-five (75) years the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School has served the people of South Carolina. From its founding in 1921 by the late Dr. Wil Lou Gray, to the present day, the agency has educated and provided vocational and life skills training to thousands of citizens of our State. Throughout that time the agency has adapted its mission to meet the critical needs of the day.

During those years, the Opportunity School successfully answered the challenge of providing alternative academic, vocational and residential services, with a focus on "at-risk" students. The traditional priority of the Opportunity School has been to provide a high school education supplemented with vocational training in order to prepare students for employment.

As our focus has followed the constant change in South Carolina's educational needs, the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School and the South Carolina National Guard have collaborated to inaugurate the South Carolina Youth Challenge Academy. Our collaborative effort is the only Youth Challenge Academy among twenty-seven states operating outside of a military facility.

Beginning with school year 1998-99, an exciting new partnership with the National Guard has enabled South Carolina to offer "at-risk" students an innovative program of structure and academic training.

The Opportunity School continues to offer traditional academic and vocational training, social and life skills improvement, and employability enhancement. The Youth Challenge Academy also offers participants a structured lifestyle with an emphasis on becoming self-reliant through a disciplined, military-style environment. The Challenge Academy is premised upon leadership, teamwork and self-discipline as taught and modeled within a quasi-military framework.

A very important component of the Academy, is a year long mentorship that requires the cadet to be paired with a community leader in his/her own community. The mentoring phase accomplishes two goals: career guidance and reinforcement of Academy values and regular tracking of the cadet's progress; whether that progress is continuing education or employment.

While the delivery method of the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School has been reshaped, our theme of motivating the "at-risk" student into a productive, employable young adult remains unchanged.

PROGRAM - RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

PROGRAM GOAL:

Provide all resources necessary to assure supervision, coordination of service learning, recreational activities and the positive direction of the cadet population on a 24 hours per day seven days per week basis.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

- To ensure all students who complete the program acquire the basic skills and self-discipline necessary to succeed in life.
- All students must meet the eight core components which consist of the following: Life Coping Skills, Work Skills Training, Leadership/Followership, Physical Fitness, Academic Excellence, Responsible Citizenship, Health & Well-being and Community involvement.
- All students will complete a minimum of 40 hours of community service and an Outdoor Education Course.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

Workload Indicators:

- 156 days per cycle
- 2 cycles per academic year
- 15 full-time and 1 part-time staff members
- 239 minimum students served annually

EFFICIENCY MEASURES:

\$1,478 per student

EFFECTIVENESS MEASURES 99-00:

- Each graduating cadet completed a minimum of 40 hours of community service and an Outdoor Education Course.
- Each graduating cadet completed life coping skills training.
- Each graduating cadet completed job readiness training to enhance employability.
- Each graduating cadet met certain physical fitness standards.

State Cost	EIA Cost	Other Cost	Federal Cost	Total Cost	Unit Cost Based on 239 Students Served
353,180	0.00	0.00	0.00	353,180	1,478

PROGRAM - SPECIAL SERVICES

PROGRAM GOAL:

Develop resources to facilitate the admissions process for prospective candidates and their families.

Develop resources to provide intervention to Candidates/Cadets, their families, and others working with Candidates/Cadets enrolled at the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

Admissions

- Prospective Candidates will be provided with information on the application process.
- Prospective Candidates will receive the assistance needed to complete the application process.
- Prospective Candidates will be interviewed and assessed with the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) prior to determining acceptance status.
- Prospective Candidates will receive a letter informing them of their acceptance status no later than two weeks prior to the start of the cycle.

Special Education

- IDEA regulations will be followed to determine Cadet's eligibility for special education services.

Intervention

- Staff will be informed of the procedures to request consultation for intervention.
- Intervention will occur within seventy-two (72) hours following a request for consultation.
- Crisis intervention will occur within twenty-four (24) hours.
- Candidates will be screened to determine eligibility for AOD (alcohol and other drugs) services during the pre challenge phase.
- Case notes reflecting intervention provided will be completed within one week of contact with Candidate/Cadet.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

Workload Indicators:

- 156 days per cycle
- 2 cycles per academic year
- 3 professionally certified staff members
- 239 minimum students served annually

EFFICIENCY MEASURES:

\$466 per student

EFFECTIVENESS MEASURES 99-00

Admissions

- Four hundred five (405) completed applications received.
- Three hundred seven (307) prospective candidates accepted.
- Twenty-six (26) prospective candidates denied.
- Seventy-two (72) did not complete application process.
- Letter informing applicant of acceptance status filed in each prospective candidate's folder.

Special Education

- A special review meeting was held for seventeen (17) students following IDEA regulations.

Intervention

- Two hundred eleven (211) students screened for AOD services, sixty (60) assessed to determine appropriateness for services. Sixty students received AOD services.
- Case notes kept to reflect intervention completed with Candidates/Cadets.

TOTAL PROGRAM COST:

State Cost	EIA Cost	Other Cost	Federal Cost	Total Cost	Unit Cost Based on 239 Student Served
48,670	40,121	0.00	22,592	111,383	466

PROGRAM - HEALTH SERVICES

PROGRAM GOAL:

Provide resources necessary to maintain the health of each student enrolled.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

- Plan appropriate nursing care to promote optimal performance of student.
- Implement plan to use community and private resources to meet all of students health needs.
- Evaluate effectiveness of all treatment plans related to student, and review as needed.
- Assess dental needs of all students and follow-up with treatments and/or referrals.
- Assess mental health concerns and refer to private or community health professionals.
- Implementation of school-based mental health services.
- Develop and implement drug urine testing program.
- Develop emergency plan to adapt to all student critical needs (diabetes, asthma, suicidal, etc.) with 911 emergency personnel as final resort.
- Develop and implement immunization program to assure that every student has appropriate immunization per DHEC schedule.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

Workload Indicators:

- 156 days per cycle
- 2 cycles per academic year
- 239 minimum students served annually

EFFICIENCY MEASURES

\$554 per student

EFFECTIVENESS MEASURES: 99-00

- 98% of graduating students have left program in better physical/mental health than when entering program as evidenced by exit physicals and signatures.
- Developed and implemented drug testing program.
- Established agreement with pharmacies to have all student prescriptions filled in a timely fashion.
- Developed emergency plan to adapt to all students critical health needs.
- Developed and implemented student immunization program per DHEC schedule.
- Provided necessary transportation to students outside a medical appointments 100% of the time.

TOTAL PROGRAM COST:

State Cost	EIA Cost	Other Cost	Federal Cost	Total Cost	Unit Cost Based on 239 Students Served
115,709	16,687	0.00	0.00	132,396	554

PROGRAM - FACILITIES AND SUPPORT SERVICES

PROGRAM GOAL:

To provide support services to all phases of the total school program. This includes food services, maintenance, public safety and transportation.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

- To maintain a nutritious and well-balanced food services program.
- To maintain a progressive, preventive program designed to operate all equipment, buildings and grounds at optimum efficiency.
- To ensure a safe and secure campus environment.
- To provide adequate transportation vehicles in support of all departments.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

Workload Indicators:

- *Food Service:* Staff of seven provides three meals daily, seven days a week. Additionally, staff provides food for special campus events such as cookouts and banquets.
- *Plant Maintenance:* Services maintain 174,000 square feet of building space and 89 acres of campus with 12 people directed by a maintenance supervisor. This staff responds to over 500 work orders annually.
- *Public Safety:* Two public safety officers certified by the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy ensure safe campus environment seven days a week and the security of 23 campus buildings.
- *Transportation:* Maintain all agency vehicles to transport students and staff to appointments. Maintain all service vehicles.

EFFICIENCY MEASURES:

\$6,035 per student

EFFECTIVENESS MEASURES 99-00

- Reduced cost by 3% per square foot for cleaning and maintaining buildings.
- Maintained an average three days between work orders and repairs for 82% of work orders.
- Maintained a 5% reduction in fat content of meals while student/staff participation remained at current levels.
- Public safety and transportation vehicles maintained as described without negative exception.

TOTAL PROGRAM COST:

State Cost	EIA Cost	Other Cost	Federal Cost	Total Cost	Unit Cost Based On 239 Students Served
1,343,912	0.00	15,928	82,446	1,442,286	6,035

WIL LOU GRAY OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT: The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School provides GED preparation to citizens of South Carolina at least sixteen (16) years of age who are most at risk of: dropping out and not completing their education; not making the transition from public schools to the work force, and whose home-school-community environment impedes rather than enhances the chance they will stay in school and become prepared for employment.

PROGRAM - EDUCATION

Program Goal:

Provide an instructional program in individualized GED labs for all students entering the program with levels, as indicated by the TABE instrument, that allows them to benefit from such instruction.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

- 60% of all students taking the GED will successfully complete the test.
- 75% of all graduating cadets will achieve at least 1 year of progress in reading during 5 months of instruction as indicated by post TABE testing.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- 142 days per cycle in academic instruction
- 2 cycles per academic year
- 239 minimum students served annually
- 19 professionally certified instructors

EFFICIENCY MEASURES:

\$5,441 per student

EFFECTIVENESS MEASURES 99-00

- 63% of cadets who took the GED were successful.
- 64% of graduating cadets achieved at least 1 year progress in reading with only 5 months instruction.

TOTAL PROGRAM COST:

State Cost	EIA Cost	Other Cost	Federal Cost	Total Cost	Unit Cost Based on 239 Students Served
824,872	415,813	59,648	-0-	1,300,333	5,441

PROGRAM - ADMINISTRATION

PROGRAM GOAL:

To maximize the mission of the agency through the following:

Outreach: Develop initiatives to reach principals, counselors, teachers and parents who pinpoint those at-risk youth who will benefit from the program conducted at the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School. This is accomplished through presentations made state wide, mailed literature, internet contact and, new to 99/2000 - a state wide TV marketing program.

Admissions: Source of Contact for Parents/Guardians of applicants, procurement of necessary documentation for furthering the admissions process, and the setting up of interviews/testing for final acceptance into program.

Personnel, Procurement and Accounting: To Maximize and safeguard the resources of the agency through the personnel, procurement and accounting process in conjunction with the regulations and laws of S. C.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

- To increase awareness of the program offered by the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School so that those at risk students throughout South Carolina who will benefit from the program will become aware of the opportunity available to them.
- To respond to inquiries and to process applications in a timely effective and efficient manner.
- To effectively manage and safeguard the resources of the agency through the personnel, procurement and accounting process.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

Workload Indicators:

- 260 day cycle
- Continuous process

EFFICIENCY MEASURES

\$2,613 per student

EFFECTIVENESS MEASURES 99-00

- Number of Presentations made throughout the state in 98/99: 42
- Number of mailouts to school dropouts: 36,580
- Number of Applications mailed out: 1000
- TV Marketing Program throughout state: 1674 TV Spots
- State and Federal audits of personnel, procurement and accounting resulted in no major audit exceptions.

TOTAL PROGRAM COST:

State Cost	EIA Cost	Other Cost	Federal Cost	Total Cost	Unit cost Based on 239 Student Served
624,446	0.00	128	0.00	624,574	2,613

