



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT
OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

AVERY D. NILES, COMMISSIONER

A MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Avery D. Niles, Commissioner

Jim Shuler, Director
Office of Communications



DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

3408 Covington Highway • Decatur, Georgia • 30032-1513
Telephone: (404) 508-7147 • Fax: (404) 508-7341

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CONTACT:

Jim Shuler, Director
DJJ Communications
(404) 508-7238

JimShuler@dj.j.state.ga.us

DJJ FOCUS ON EDUCATION: High School Graduations and Technology Upgrades For Georgia's 181st School District

(ATLANTA – GA) Commissioner Avery D. Niles is proud to announce the success of DJJ's spring graduations. At Georgia's Youth Development Campuses at Eastman, Sumter, Milan, Augusta and Atlanta, the Department of Juvenile Justice awarded twenty-seven high school diplomas and seventy-nine GED's (General Educational Development) certificates during the month of June.

"Many people don't realize DJJ is chartered as Georgia's 181st school district," said Commissioner Niles. "But the education system the Department of Juvenile Justice and its Board have developed for Georgia is one of the largest educators in the state. We recently renamed and re-dedicated this system as the Georgia Preparatory Academy."

The Georgia Preparatory Academy is accredited by both the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the Correctional Educational Association (CEA). In addition to the twenty-seven high school grads and seventy-nine GED certificates just awarded, DJJ also presented forty-six TCCs (Technical Certificates of Credit) earned this year from four Georgia Technical Schools across the state which have partnerships with DJJ.

Another fifty students in the Graduate Education Program (GEP) received a "Georgia BEST" certificate signifying their passage of a soft skills program developed by the Georgia Department of Labor. Photos of DJJ's 2013 graduation ceremonies can be viewed on the agency's "News & Views" webpage at <http://www.djjnewsandviews.org/2013djjgraduation/>.

"Our goal is that every youth that leaves our care and custody is a grade level or above where they ranked when they entered our system," said Commissioner Niles.

(MORE MORE MORE)

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

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In order to increase future numbers of DJJ youth graduates, the DJJ Education Division announced it will roll out additional technology upgrades in its classrooms this summer. Starting in August, under the direction of Associate Superintendent Dr. Audrey Armistad, the Education Division will pilot an e-Reading Program using Kindles at four youth detention facilities around the state. The Kindles will be used to supplement the newly instituted *Drop Everything and Read* program.

"This innovative reading program is focused on increasing academic achievement throughout all DJJ facilities," said Associate Superintendent Armistad. "The *Drop Everything and Read* program helps to reduce the so-called "summer slide" achievement gap that can disproportionately affect Georgia's disadvantaged youth. If we can get our students to enjoy reading, it often follows that they can begin to enjoy other types of learning as well."

Also debuting this August will be the installation of Promethean Interactive Learning Boards in each DJJ classroom in every DJJ facility across the state. The Interactive Learning Boards are electronic whiteboards which combine pen and multi-touch functionality, integrated sound and software. The combined board effects help create an all-in-one immersive and interactive learning environment for youth in DJJ classrooms.

"Many of our students are hard to reach through traditional teaching methods," said Dr. Armistad. "The installation of this state-of-the-art classroom equipment has the potential to bring a whole new dimension to learning that can help our dedicated education staff make breakthroughs in teaching young people here."

For more information on DJJ's continuing commitment to provide the most recent technological improvements to its classrooms, the best educational programs, and the best possible learning environment for the youth in its care, please visit the Department of Juvenile Justice Education Division on the web at www.djj.state.ga.us .

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..The mission statement of the Georgia Preparatory Academy is to provide a comprehensive educational program which will facilitate the successful integration of each student into the community and workplace..