



# Reentry 2030: How It Impacts Education for Incarcerated People

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## The Problem

**For far too long, reentry supports have been fragmented, inequitable, and insufficient, and millions of people have been shut out from the opportunities they need to successfully reintegrate into their communities.**



### Criminal Record =

- Legal and informal barriers
- Diminished access to services and opportunities
- Racial Disparities Persist

When our policies and practices make it difficult for people to succeed in their communities, we perpetuate racial inequities and fuel disparities in employment, health care, treatment, and housing access.

Reentry 2030

Executive Order 303

Joint Reentry Council (JRC)

Subcommittees

Education Subcommittee

# NCDAC EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

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## Section 3 of EO 303: Educational Pathways in Correctional Facilities

In order to increase access to and completion of educational programs in state correctional facilities, DAC shall:

1. Revise the existing Prison Education Consortium to include representation from all prison higher education, apprenticeship, and workforce partners including the North Carolina Community College System Office, participating community colleges, the UNC System Office, participating UNC System institutions, a representative of North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities (NCICU), participating independent colleges and universities, the North Carolina Department of Commerce, current or formerly incarcerated students, and philanthropic organizations.
2. In consultation with the Prison Education Consortium, develop local, labor market-driven educational pathways that will guide course offerings and transferable pathways to complete a diploma, degree, or credential.

## Section 3 of EO 303: Educational Pathways in Correctional Facilities

3. In consultation with the Prison Education Consortium, develop a plan to effectively leverage state, federal, and private funding sources to provide efficient educational programs that, when possible, result in a diploma, degree, or credential.
4. Require education providers utilized by DAC to develop and implement plans for how incarcerated people who do not complete coursework while incarcerated can complete coursework upon release. DAC is encouraged to prioritize offering educational programs in which participants will have unconditional admission to educational programs following release from prison.

## Section 3 of EO 303: Educational Pathways in Correctional Facilities

5. In consultation with the Labor and Economic Analysis Division of the North Carolina Department of Commerce, develop an annual report first submitted to the Office of the Governor in October 2024 and annually thereafter that provides participation and completion outcomes for people participating in all prison education programs offered by community colleges and four-year colleges and universities, including apprenticeships. When possible, data in the report should be disaggregated by program type, correctional facility, age, gender, and race/ethnicity in order to ensure equitable participation.
6. Create a publicly available, searchable database of all coursework and apprenticeships available to incarcerated people offered by both community colleges and four-year colleges and universities in the state.

## Section 3 of EO 303: Educational Pathways in Correctional Facilities

7. Establish quality measures and evaluation for all prison education programs, including apprenticeships, diplomas, short-term credentials, associate degrees, and four-year degrees.
8. Increase higher education programming for incarcerated people utilizing Pell Grants by partnering with colleges and universities that qualify to be a prison education partner and meet all federal guidelines.
9. Minimize the movement of incarcerated people who are currently enrolled in an education program, including apprenticeships, and are not requesting a transfer, until they have completed their program unless they can immediately enroll in the same program in the correctional facility to which they will be transferred.



## Section 3 of EO 303: Educational Pathways in Correctional Facilities

10. Ensure that incarcerated people receive support to develop resumes accurately portraying all education and work experiences.

# DAC Strategic Plan

## Overarching Goal 1:

Improve economic mobility of  
formerly incarcerated people

By increasing the number of local reentry councils and providing access to educational, technical training, registered apprenticeship, work-based learning, and employment opportunities pre- and post-release.

## OBJECTIVE

# 2

**Increasing the number of high school diplomas, high school equivalencies and industry-valued continuing education credentials earned by eligible people in adult and juvenile secure custody facilities by 75%.**

- Working on a program to minimize transfers and maximize the use of risk-needs assessment.
- Created a publicly available database of all coursework, apprenticeships, jobs, and other opportunities. This will soon include medical programs as well.
- Increased the numbers of high school equivalencies and industry-valued credentials in 2023-2024 from 2022-2023
- Working with the NCCCS and Workforce Dev Advisory Board to intentionally increase industry-valued credentials based on Workforce Development List of those credentials
- Visiting each prison institution monthly to reduce barriers and increase completions/success
- Hired a Workforce Development Programs Analyst in Education Services
- Continuous recruiting for HSE and ongoing programs

OBJECTIVE

3

Increase the number of post-secondary certificates, diplomas, and degrees offered in state correctional institutions by 25%.

OBJECTIVE

4

Increase the number of post-secondary certificates, diplomas, and degrees programs available to students at no cost by 25%.

- Obtained baseline metrics for criteria to be tracked
- Working with ~50 college partners to increase certificates, diplomas, and degrees in the upcoming year
- Planning for degrees to be offered in 2026-2027 and beyond
- Advertising statewide for programming repeatedly
- Providing mailing and email addresses so the population or family members can reach out independently if necessary

## OBJECTIVE

# 6

**Increase the number of registered apprenticeships completed by incarcerated people in both adult and juvenile secure custody facilities by 50% by 2030.**

- Obtained information about current apprenticeships
- Organized the tracking of apprenticeships
- Strengthened relationship with ApprenticeshipsNC
- Created team to work on apprenticeships within the Rehabilitation section
- Collaboration between Education Services and Rehabilitation
- Brainstorming meeting (upcoming) between Education Services, Rehabilitation, and Correction Enterprises teams to find opportunities for collaboration

## OBJECTIVE

# 10

**Ensure that opportunities for digital education and communication, as well as digital literacy training, are made available to 100% of incarcerated people.**

- NC Department of Information Technology designed iNet (a safe, secure WIFI connection to the internet)
- Obtained Digital Technology Grant from NCDIT (\$1. million)
- iNet has been installed in all institutions except for two due to structural issues (we're working around those)
- The entire population has access to tablets with technology available (approx. 30K)
- Successful completion of pilot for a digital literacy course to specifically teach skills now offered in 5 institutions
- Integrating technology in all educational programs
- At least 15 laptops and charging carts in all prisons

## OBJECTIVE

# 10

**Ensure that opportunities for digital education and communication, as well as digital literacy training, are made available to 100% of incarcerated people.**

- Access Points (APs) installed in 183 classrooms agency-wide (mimics a home modem to connect devices to WIFI)
- Whitelisting academic, career, vocational, and workforce websites to use on the iNet (adding more regularly-Total to Date: 160)
- Agency-wide: Approximately 1850 student iNet Accounts, 100 iNet portal coordinators, 120 Instructors
- 12 NCDIT Team of iNet Collaborators (Engineers, Coders, Developers, Cyber Security Security)
- Completed procurement process to transform 183 prison classrooms to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Hi-Flex classrooms resulting in up-to-date technology
- Applied for a new NTIA (National Telecommunications and Information Administration grant)
- NC is one of the national trendsetters for Education Technology in prisons

# Reentry 2030 Progress Report December 2024

<https://www.dac.nc.gov/documents/reentry-2030-progress-report-12-10-2024/open>

## Education Services Report October 2024

<https://www.dac.nc.gov/documents/educational-pathways-correctional-facilities-participation-and-completion-outcomes-first-annual/open>



Objective 2 – Increasing the number of high school diplomas, high school equivalencies and industry-valued continuing education credentials earned by incarcerated people in adult and juvenile facilities by 75%

Education Subcommittee			
Strategies	Current Status	Baseline Summary	Notes
Metrics	Current Status	Baseline	Notes
Performance Metric 2.1 – Number of high school diplomas earned.	In Progress	0 (DAC); 30 (DPS)	
Performance Metric 2.2 – Percentage of high school diplomas earned of total attempted.	In Progress	N/A (DAC); 58.8% (DPS)	
Performance Metric 2.3 – Number of high school equivalencies earned.	In Progress	578 (DAC); 42 (DPS)	
Performance Metric 2.4 – Percentage of high school equivalencies earned of total attempted.	In Progress	46% (DAC); 82% (DPS)	578 of 1256; # calculated is number earned of # of students who attempted all 5 tests
Performance Metric 2.5 – Number of non-credit credentials training programs completed.	In Progress	89 (DPS)	This data is not currently tracked as a separate data point for DAC. This data is combined for 2023-2024 as non-credit credentials, licenses & credentials, and certificates together in Metric 3.1.
Performance Metric 2.6 – Percentage of completers.	In Progress	48% (DPS)	This data is not currently tracked as a separate data point for DAC.

## Metrics

Objective 2 – Increasing the number of high school diplomas, high school equivalencies and industry-valued continuing education credentials earned by incarcerated people in adult and juvenile facilities by 75%

Performance Metric 2.7 – Number of licenses or credentials earned.	In Progress	89 (DPS)	This data is not currently tracked as a separate data point for DAC.
Performance Metric 2.8 – Percentage of licenses or credentials earned of total attempted.	In Progress	48% (DPS)	This data is not currently tracked as a separate data point for DAC.
Performance Metric 2.9 – Percentage of alignment with the NC Workforce Credentials list of high-quality industry recognized credentials.	In Progress	80% (DPS)	Will have by Monday
Performance Metric 2.10 – Average time to completion (months) for high school diplomas, high school equivalencies, and non-credit credentials training programs (broken out by type).	In Progress	21 months = Average time to complete high school diplomas during the 2023-2024 school year (DPS); 4.16 months = Average time to complete HiSET during the 2023-2024 school year (DPS)	This data is not currently tracked as a separate data point for DAC. I may be able to get it from the Innovation section within a few weeks.
Performance Metric 2.11 – Percentage of students funded by NC Prison Education Program funds (allocated by the NC General Assembly), % of students funded by Title II, and % funded by other sources.		NCDAC metrics: PEP funds: 41%; Title II: 53%; Other: 5%; NCDPS Juvenile Justice Education Services receives Title 1, Title 2, IDEA, and Carl Perkins grant funding to support education programming for all students in addition to general education funds already allocated for youth education services. 5.25%= DJJ	

## Metrics

Objective 3 – Increase the number of post-secondary certificates, diplomas, and degrees offered in state correctional institutions by 25%.

Metrics	Current Status	Baseline	Notes
Performance Metric 3.1 – Number of post-secondary certificate programs, number of learners enrolled in certificate programs, number of completions of certificate programs, and average time to completion.	In Progress	Number of non-credit, certificate, credential, and licensure programs: 100; # of Learners: 5980; # of completers: 3344	This data is combined for 2023-2024 as non-credit credentials, licenses & credentials, and certificates together. Average time to completion is not currently tracked.
Performance Metric 3.2 – Number of post-secondary diploma programs, number of learners enrolled in diploma programs, number of completions of diploma programs, and average time to completion.	In Progress	# of post-secondary diplomas: 1; # of learners: 15; # of completers: 12; average time to completion: 9 months (2 semesters)	AB Tech (1) at Craggy CI-Electrical Systems Technology
Performance Metric 3.3 – Number of associate degree programs, number of learners enrolled in associate degree programs, number of completions of associate degree programs, and average time to completion.	In Progress	Number of programs: 8; Number of learners: 157; Number of completions: 38; Average time to completion: 2 years	Number of AA/AS Degrees: 8 [AB Tech (1); BCCC (1); Stanly CC (1); Robeson CC (2); Campbell (2); Pamlico (1)]
Performance Metric 3.4 – Number of bachelor’s degree programs, number of learners enrolled in bachelor’s degree programs, number of completions of bachelor’s degree programs, and average time to completion.	In Progress	Number of programs: 4; Number of learners: 62; Number of completions: 25; Average time to completion: 4 years	Number of Programs: 4 [Campbell U @ Anson (1) & Sampson (1); Judson College @ NCCIW (1) & Nash (1)]

## Metrics

Objective 3 – Increase the number of post-secondary certificates, diplomas, and degrees offered in state correctional institutions by 25%.

<p>Performance Metric 3.5 – Number of postsecondary certificates, diplomas, or degrees earned by learners who already earned a postsecondary, certificate, diploma, or degree in a related field. (Master’s, doctoral, and professional degrees) programs, number of learners enrolled in graduate level programs, number of completions of graduate level degree programs, and average time to completion.</p>	<p>In Progress</p>	<p>Not Available</p>	<p>This data is not obtained in diagnostics and we have no way of obtaining this data at this time.</p>
<p>Performance Metric 3.7 – Percentage of students funded by NC Prison Education Program funds (allocated by the NC General Assembly), % of students funded by Pell Grants and % funded by other sources (private: Field Ministers at Nash &amp; NCCIW; Communications at Sampson?; ? at Pamlico).</p>	<p>In Progress</p>	<p>0</p> <p><u>For certificate programs: 100%</u> <u>PEP funded. For diplomas and</u> <u>degrees-PEP funded: 33%;</u> <u>Second Chance Pell (no full Pell):</u> <u>58%; Legislative Special</u> <u>Appropriation: 9%</u></p>	<p>At this time, NCDAC does not offer any graduate level degree programs.</p> <p>This data is broken down by type.</p>

# Metrics

Objective 4 – Increase the number of post-secondary certificates, diplomas, and degrees programs available to students at no cost by 25%.

Metrics	Current Status	Date of Current Status	Baseline	Notes
Performance Metric 4.1 – Number of approved Pell Grant programs (broken down by academic level).	In Progress	6/30/2024	12 Second Chance Pell programs; 0 full Pell programs; By type: 1 certification, 1 diploma, 6 AA degrees, 4 BA degrees	We have 2nd Chance Pell programs, which will expire soon (AB Tech, Robeson CC, Campbell, Sampson, Shaw. Campbell University passed their accreditation and is waiting only on their US DOE application now to become a full Pell partner.
Performance Metric 4.2 – Number of postsecondary partners with approved Pell Grant programs (broken down by institution type).	In Progress	6/30/2024	5 Second Chance Pell partners with 12 programs; 0 full Pell partners; By Type: 3 female institution programs, 7 male institution programs. Minimum custody: 5; Medium custody: 7; Close custody: 3	We have 2nd Chance Pell programs, which will expire soon. Campbell University passed their accreditation and is waiting only on their US DOE application now to become a full Pell partner. Unclear what 'by institution type means. As some institutions have multiple custody levels, this is broken down by how many programs are accessible to each custody level offenders
Performance Metric 4.3 – Number of approved post-secondary degree programs funded through Prison Education Program funds.	In Progress	6/30/2024	2 associate degree programs	BCCC (1); Stanly CC (1)
Performance Metric 4.4 – Number of correctional facilities with an associate degree or bachelor's degree program.	In Progress	July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024	10 correctional facilities	Anson (2); Sampson (2); NCCIW (1); Hyde (1); Lumberton (2); Pamlico (1); Nash (1); Craggy (1); WCCW (1); Albemarle CI (1)
Performance Metric 4.5 – Average cost per student per program.	In Progress	July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024	Certificate programs = \$180/student average; Higher Education (degrees and diplomas) = \$8,993.40/student average	

# Priorities for Education Programming

## EDUCATION SERVICES

### EDUCATION PROGRAM PRIORITIES

01  
NCDAC

#### CREATE PATHWAYS

Create pathways for students to obtain a certificate that can continue on to a two-year degree, then to a four-year degree (not necessarily in the same facility)



02  
NCDAC

#### INTEGRATE CAREER ADVISING

Integrate intensive college and career advising into all courses and degree/diploma tracks



03  
NCDAC

#### OFFER PROGRAMS WITH CREDENTIALS

Post-Secondary and vocational partners should be intentional about offering credentials, including certificates, NCCER certification, diplomas, and degrees



04  
NCDAC

#### CREATE STACKABLE CREDENTIALS

Create stackable credentials and be intentional about enrollment in stackable credentials, integrating or offering students opportunities to obtain vocational skills with business, soft skills, technology, financial literacy, and other skills



# Priorities for Education Programming

05  
NCDAC

## INTEGRATE DIGITAL LITERACY

Integrate digital literacy (in the broadest sense of the term) into all courses. All prison facilities will have access to instructional technologies that are designed to support and enhance respective curriculums



06  
NCDAC

## CONTINUALLY INCREASE DEGREE OFFERINGS

Increase the number of two-year degree and four-year degree program offerings to the incarcerated population



07  
NCDAC

## INCREASE PROGRAM COMPLETION RATES

Increase in the percentage of completion of programming



08  
NCDAC

## OFFER PROGRAMS THAT LEAD TO EMPLOYMENT

Offer as many "felony-Friendly" programs that are employable and useful in the "real world" as possible



# THANK YOU!

## Dr. Brooke B. Wheeler

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