Introduction
This Program Highlight is the first in a series exploring the use of educational technology in juvenile secure-care facilities. This Highlight examines three facilities in Indiana and their efforts to provide access to online supplemental textbook materials to teachers and students. Educational technologies such as these have become more common in classrooms across the country. Teachers and students can now take advantage of a world of digital content from curricula to training materials to traditional and social media. Both formal research and anecdotal evidence have shown that, when used properly, technology can enhance student achievement, improve student outcomes, and improve skills and knowledge of teachers. However, juvenile detention and correctional facilities traditionally have been reluctant to employ educational technology because of perceived risks to security and safety. Many facilities feel the risk of students using technology inappropriately outweighs potential benefits—especially with regard to the Internet. This rationale is weakened by increasing evidence of the benefits of educational technology for students and teachers.

Juvenile Corrections in Indiana
The Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) Division of Youth Services (DYS) provides correctional services in five medium- and maximum-security juvenile correctional facilities serving approximately 500 males and females. The majority of youth in IDOC facilities are serious or violent offenders, those deemed most in need of secure supervision.

DYS is committed to continually working toward enhancing the services provided to the youth in their care. They have adopted the Balanced and Restorative Justice Model (BARJ) as the foundation and core beliefs in providing juvenile justice services and also participate in the Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators’ Performance-based Standards (Pbs). BARJ and PBs provide the overarching, guiding principles for facility operations, treatment programs, youth development, and community re-entry.

Gaining Access to Online Educational Content
Several years ago, while attempting to purchase textbooks for students in juvenile correctional facilities, DYS education staff discovered that most of the supplemental educational material that accompanied textbooks was available only online. To ensure that youth in juvenile correctional facilities had access to the same materials as their non-system-involved peers, the State decided to invest in large, interactive whiteboards as part of an operating system that also included a projector and computer software. By installing this technology and connecting it to the Internet, correctional classrooms could access materials that otherwise would not be available to them. Systems like this are used in more than 2 million public K–12 classrooms and reach more than 40 million students and their teachers globally.

Currently, the interactive whiteboard technology is used in three of Indiana’s juvenile correctional facilities: Madison, Pendleton, and Logansport. Combined, these facilities serve the majority of youth incarcerated in the State.
**Overcoming Challenges to Implementation**

IDOC and DYS administrators agreed that access to the online content was critical to ensure that educational opportunities for their youth equaled those of students in the public schools. Therefore, the main challenge to installing and using the interactive whiteboards was finding adequate funding. With limited state and local budgets, the IDOC utilized a combination of Federal Title I, Part D and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds. These two programs are intended to supplement core state and local education provision and provided the opportunity to purchase the hardware to do so. The state was able to provide some funding to maintain the infrastructure for secure Internet access.

Finally, to help make use of the whiteboards effective, the whiteboard vendor provided training and assistance to teachers.

**Maintaining Security and Safety**

With the initiative readily funded and embraced by teachers and administrators, DYS instituted measures to maintain security and safety. They started by limiting access to the whiteboards and online content to the classroom teachers only. All whiteboards are connected to teacher-controlled computers that are locked any time the teacher is not in the room. DYS further ensured safety and security by working with the whiteboard vendors to install a NovaNet intranet, which sets up firewalls that prevent access to non-educational content in the classroom. This double layer of physical and technological protection ensures that students can benefit from online learning without risking facility security.

**Outcomes and Next Steps**

Teachers in the three facilities that use interactive whiteboards have told DYS staff they now have greater success with communication lessons and they are particularly pleased with the ability to share online supplemental materials with their students. They remain enthusiastic about the use of the technology and report that the students benefit as well. The state is working closely with other states like Oregon that use education technology more extensively to learn more about potential expansion in Indiana’s secure-care classrooms. Indiana is committed to providing all youth who are system-involved with the same access to educational technology as their non-system-involved peers, and they consider the use of interactive whiteboards to access online supplemental textbook material in several juvenile correctional facilities a positive first step in that direction.

**For more information** on Indiana Juvenile Correctional Facilities and their education programming, contact:

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