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Providence Education's Center for
Diversity, Culture, and Global Education
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THE PROVIDENCE EDUCATIONAL CENTER -)

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ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

NCJRS

EXEMPLARY PROJECT VALIDATION REPORT

SEP 15 1976

Submitted to:

ACQUISITION

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Exemplary Projects Program of the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice is designed to identify and document outstanding criminal justice programs across the country which are suitable for replication. The Providence Educational Center (PEC) of St. Louis, Missouri has been nominated for designation as an Exemplary Project.

At the request of the NILECJ, Urban and Rural Systems Associates (URSA) conducted a validation study of the PEC. This report presents the findings resulting from that visit and is intended to provide the Exemplary Projects Advisory Board with information bearing on the specific questions raised by the Board and with additional information designed to help the Board assess the extent to which the PEC program meets the Exemplary Project Screening Criteria established by the Advisory Board. Findings are discussed in Section 2.0 of this report. Specific questions posed by the Exemplary Project Advisory Board are addressed within the context of the Screening Criteria to which they apply. Figure 1.1-A consists of the Advisory Boards Questions regarding PEC. Questions 1, 2, and 4 are addressed in Section 2.1 on Goal Achievement and Effectiveness. Question 3 is addressed in Section 2.3 on Efficiency. Questions 5 and 6 are discussed as part of Section 2.4 on Replicability.

1.2 Sources of Information

The information on which this report is based was secured through a review and analysis of all available documentation on the Providence Educational Center (PEC) and through a series of interviews and observation conducted on-site between 4 December and 7 December 1973. Prior to the site visit, URSA staff contacted the Missouri SPA (MLEA) by telephone to discuss PEC and the schedule for the on-site visit. Staff of the MLEA coordinated the entire on-site visit and arranged

Figure 1.1-A

Validation of Providence Educational Center

Information Needed by the Exemplary Project Advisory Board

1. The Providence Educational Center appears to be achieving an impressive success rate with its juvenile enrollees. Are these statistics accurate? What is the comparative effectiveness of other forms of treatment for juvenile offenders, e.g. Missouri Hills Home for Boys, Missouri State Training School at Booneville, Boys Town of Missouri, probation, other?
2. What criteria are used by the juvenile court in determining which youth go to Providence and which to one of the other forms of treatment named above? What criteria are used by the Providence staff in refusing to accept a youth into the program? What would have been the most likely disposition of youth in the Providence program if the Center did not exist? What is the percentage breakdown of crimes charged to youth in the program?
3. Is the program run economically? Are the cost comparisons with Missouri juvenile institutions accurate? (See page 8 of the Exp application).
4. Page 6 of the St. Louis application cites improvement in the average math and reading level of Providence enrollees. Can any comparison be made with the average math and reading level of delinquent inner city populations in other parts of the country?
5. What has been the community reaction to the program? Was there any resistance to establishment of the Center? Can lessons be drawn for other communities?
6. What is the relative importance of staff competence and commitment to success of the program?

for pertinent appointments and interviews.

The URSA site visit team was composed of Dr. Barry Krisberg, Senior Research Scientist at URSA and a faculty member of the School of Criminology, University of California at Berkeley; and Mr. Noel Day, an URSA partner and the URSA Project Manager.

The documents reviewed by the URSA team prior to the on-site visit included:

1. PEC's Exemplary Project Application (August 1973)
2. Final Narrative Report (May 15, 1972 to March 15, 1973)
3. PEC Statistics 1972-73
4. PEC Evaluation Status (December 5, 1973)

Following the on-site visit URSA reviewed additional materials supplied by PEC including:

1. Personnel Policies
2. Assorted Administrative memoranda
3. All forms utilized by PEC (each form was annotated at URSA's request to indicate staff originator and destination, purpose and frequency of use)
4. Assorted Program materials (Newsletters, Student Newspapers, Description of Physical Education Program, etc.)

During the on-site visit the URSA team conducted interviews with PEC staff, PEC Board members, participants in the PEC program, Juvenile Court officers, staff of the Missouri Hills Home for Boys, and staff of the MLEA (Region 5), and other key figures in juvenile law enforcement and criminal justice.

PEC staff members who were interviewed included:

- The Executive Director
- The Coordinator of the "After-Care" Component
- The Educational Director
- The Social Service Director

- Social Service Workers
- Counselors
- The Assistant Director of Education and Curriculum Coordinator
- The Reading Specialist
- Team Teachers
- The Physical Education Instructor, the Shop Instructor, and the Arts and Crafts Teacher

Informal interviews were conducted with approximately 12-15 participants in the PEC program. Interviews with participants were conducted at random in most instances since the URSA team enjoyed completely open access to PEC staff and participants. The participants who were interviewed included the chairman of the student council, contributors to the PEC student newspaper, and youth who the URSA team observed in classroom activities or encountered in the hallways of the building.

Juvenile Court officers and law enforcement and correctional officials who were interviewed included the Director of the Missouri Hills Home for Boys, the chief of the St. Louis Police Department's Juvenile Bureau, staff of the St. Louis Crime Commission, and the Director of Probation Services for the juvenile court. Juvenile court Judge Gaertner was unable to meet with the URSA team. He was the only significant local figure who URSA was unable to interview. Program activities observed during the on-site visit included:

- classroom teaching
- group counseling
- individual counseling
- remedial reading instruction
- physical education and arts and craft classes
- a PEC staff team meeting reviewing individual student progress and goals
- informal gatherings of students in the cafeteria and student lounge.

Finally, the URSA team reviewed the curriculum materials available for teachers to use and remedial education materials.

1.3 Project Summary

1.3.1 Structure and Concept

The sponsoring organization for the Providence Educational Center's program is the Providence Inner-City Corporation--a private non-profit organization with a Board of Directors comprised of local business and civic leaders. PEC is the major programmatic component of the Providence Inner-City Corporation with current annual budget of \$315,000 and a capacity of 75 youths.. The other component of the Corporation's activities is the Providence Group Home, a small residential facility with a current annual budget of \$39,000 and a capacity of 12 youths. Some, but not all of the residents in the Group Home are enrolled in PEC's program. The overall organization structure of the Providence Inner-City Corporation is presented schematically in Figure 1.3-A.

PEC's program operates under a sub-contract between the Providence Inner-City Corporation and the St. Louis City Juvenile Court, the prime contractor for the LEAA funds through the Missouri Law Enforcement Assistance Council.

The PEC program is aimed at treating delinquent youth and preventing juvenile recidivism--particularly in terms of stranger-to-stranger crimes. Although it is not explicitly stated by PEC in any of the program literature reviewed by URSA, it is clear that the program is conceptually based on the theory that delinquency, in many instances, is functionally--and perhaps even causally--related to school failure and lack of social and economic achievement. In response to this theoretical stance, PEC combines a strong emphasis on remedial education with counseling for delinquent youths with previous histories of school related problems. PEC's approach focuses on the development of highly individualized and specific educational, attitudinal, and behavioral goals for students enrolled in the program.

1.3.2 Operational Approach

Internally, PEC's operating structure consists of three functional components: the educational component, the social services and counseling component, and the "After-Care" component. The educational component is responsible for all instruction including remediation. The social services component is responsible for all individual and group counseling, social service referrals, and liaisons between PEC and families and between PEC and relevant public and private agencies in St. Louis. The After-Care component, begun in June 1973, is responsible for assisting "graduates" of the PEC program in making the transition back into the public schools or the job market. Figure 1.3-B illustrates the organization of PEC's staff in these components.

Youth are referred to PEC from three sources:

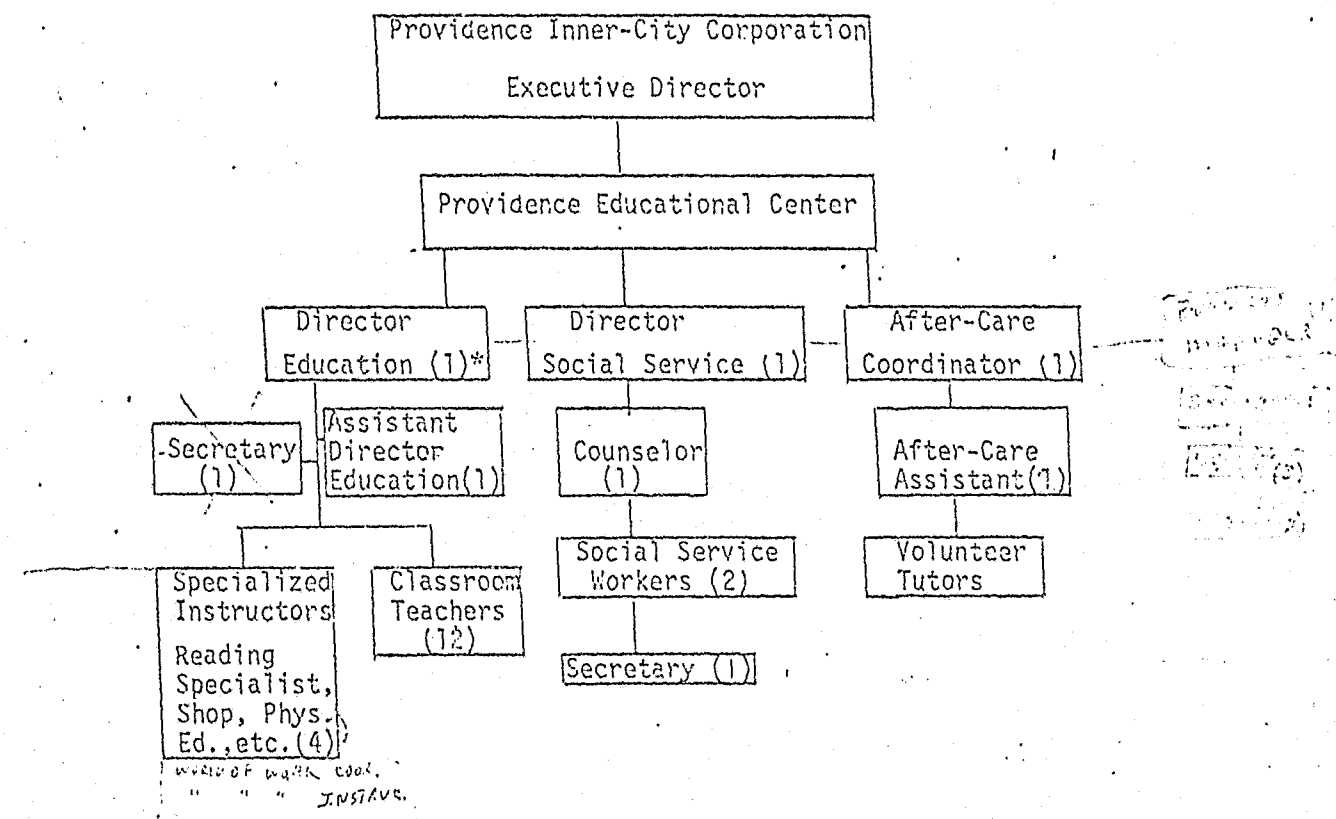
- The St. Louis Juvenile Court refers youth after they are adjudicated on the recommendation of probation officials;
- Probation officers--at their discretion--may refer youth who are encountering difficulty in school without prior court approval; and,
- The Missouri Hills Home for Boys refers some youth and transports them to PEC each day.

The Juvenile Court system is the largest source of referrals to PEC.

After a preliminary diagnosis of need, PEC staff develops an individual treatment program for each student. An individual treatment program sets forth goals related to educational achievements, and social, attitudinal, and behavioral adjustments. Each individual treatment plan is reviewed every two weeks to one month and updated.

The results of the initial diagnostic battery of tests given each student at the time of entry into PEC are also used to guide class

Figure 1.3-B
PEC Staff Organization



*Figures in parentheses indicate number of each category of staff.

assignments. Classes are limited to a maximum of 12 students. A team consisting of 2 teachers with ancillary assistance from a social worker is responsible for each class. In addition to basic instruction in reading, arithmetic, and language skill development geared to the needs, learning styles, and skill levels of each student, the classroom teams provide instruction in Black history, science, and social studies. The core curriculum approach is utilized wherever possible in order to integrate learning in each of the various subject areas. Students in need of sustained remedial assistance in reading are assigned to the reading laboratory one-half hour per day for individual assistance or programmed instruction. In addition to the Reading Specialist, twelve volunteers (6 from the Junior League and 6 Christian Brother novices) provide intensive one-to-one assistance for students in the reading lab.

Other elements in the Educational Component of the PEC program include: physical education, arts and crafts, a woodwork shop, an electronics shop, and a student newspaper.

Counseling is provided on an individual basis in one-half hour weekly sessions while group counseling sessions are scheduled once each week for each classroom group. Staff of the social service component are also responsible for aggressively following up on each absence--either by telephone or, in the case of repeated absence, through a home visit. In addition, social service staff undertakes other liaison functions between PEC and student's families including parental counseling, referrals of students and their families for ancillary services, and--in some instances--an active advocacy role in assisting student's families in their relationships and dealings with landlords, health agencies, the welfare department, and other public and private agencies.

The After-Care component of PEC begins its involvement with youth several months prior to their anticipated graduation from the program. In consultation with the classroom team (teacher and social worker) and other significant persons (e.g. Deputy Juvenile

officers, PEC's reading specialist, etc.) the After-Care staff begins to lay out a plan designed to assist the student to make the transition back into public school or into a job or vocational training program. Suitable schools or potential jobs are identified and as part of the After-Care plan, staff may accompany PEC students on visits to the school--for instance--or students may be assigned to attend classes at the public school for a week or two on an interim basis. After-Care staff also typically contacts guidance counselors and teachers at the proposed new school, alerts them to the history and needs of the students and offers them assistance in insuring that the transition is successful. After the student graduates from PEC the After-Care staff maintains liaison with the school or the employer until the transition is assured.

Students "graduate" from PEC when they have achieved a 5th grade achievement level in reading (the level of functioning required for High School admission in St. Louis) and/or they have demonstrated adequate functioning in terms of attitudes and interpersonal behavior. "Graduates" may be referred to programs including:

- Public High Schools
- Public Grade Schools (if age or social factors suggest that the youth is not ready for High School but has "learned to behave in ways acceptable to the public schools")
- Private High Schools (PEC's Board of Directors has raised funds for several scholarships)
- Jobs in the private sector
- Work programs (Job Corps, or SWAP-Schools Work Apprenticeship Programs, etc.) or,
- Proprietary schools (technical, vocational, etc.)

The average length of time in attendance at PEC is less than nine (9) months at the present time. However, PEC staff feels that a period of one year to eighteen (18) months would be more beneficial for most of the students currently enrolled in the program.

1.3.3 Developmental History of PEC

Since receipt of its initial federal funding in 1972 and its coincident commitment to serve delinquent youth, several significant modifications in concept, scope, and staffing have occurred.

In May 1972, PEC received an LEAA grant to serve 36 delinquent youths. By November, 1972, PEC had an enrollment of 75 delinquent youth. Growth between May and November was rapid and uncontrolled. Staffing was hurried and non-deliberate. At this point the current Executive Director was hired.

In January 1973, PEC staff attended a one week planning workshop which led to the development of the social service department, further clarification of staff roles, and an approach to discipline based on behavior modification theory. At the time, PEC's program was based on a "pathological" conception of delinquency rather than a "sociological" and "functional" theory of causation.

In June 1973, the After-Care component was added to the program. The creation and implementation of the After-Care component was catalyzed by the fact that some 50 students were "graduating" from PEC's "protected" environment and returning to public school or entering the job market.

During the same period, (June 1973) PEC established a clear set of criteria for staff positions; terminated a substantial number of those who staffed the first program year, and hired new staff with more experience and professional training. All members of the new staff were required to have degrees in their area of speciality or related areas. With the hiring of new staff, the conceptual basis of PEC's program was also redefined to emphasize "functional" concerns and behavior modification was de-emphasized. The program's experience with behavior modification indicated some success with younger children but little success with older youth. PEC staff theorizes that the reward system was inadequate for older youth and that staff members were inconsistent in application.

In July 1973, the "Master Teacher-Assistant Teacher" concept was changed to a "Team Teacher" approach.

As of December 5, 1973, the Executive Director of PEC mentioned his concern with developing a vocational program module including an orientation to the "world of work," mini-courses geared to meet existing manpower needs in the community, and on-site job training for an estimated twenty (20) students with continuing supervision provided by PEC staff.

From a peak of between 75 and 80 youth at any one time between September 5, 1972, and June 30, 1973, the PEC enrollment as of December 5, 1973, was down to 58 students although an additional 50 ex-students were also being served by After-Care. The drop in enrollment was attributed to the following factors:

- in June 1973, 50 students "graduated from PEC,
- 28 students of 78, therefore returned after the summer vacation period,
- 30 new referrals were accepted between August and December 1973 to bring the current enrollment to 58 as of December 5, 1973.

The Executive Director also attributed his enrollment to a trend towards more severe sentencing in the juvenile court--particularly for recidivists--and to a seasonal factor--that is, that probation officers identify and refer the largest number of youth with school related problems to alternate programs like PEC mid-way through the school year.

2.0 FINDINGS OF THE VALIDATION STUDY

Findings regarding the PEC's suitability for Exemplary Project status and replication are organized in this section according to the criteria established by the Exemplary Project Advisory Board. In addition, specific questions raised by the Advisory Board are also addressed in this section.

2.1 Goal Achievement

2.1.1 Program Objectives and Performance

PEC's goals as stated in application for Exemplary status read:

- "1) to reduce street crimes among students enrolled (in PEC);
- "2) to reduce truancy and improve educational skills, especially in reading;
- "3) to engage students in a therapeutic program which will rehabilitate students by developing a more positive self-concept and thus increase social adjustment;
- "4) to work with parents of all enrolled students;
- "5) to orient each boy towards a successful placement in public schools, vocational schools, and/or employment."

In URSA's opinion, Goals 1 and 5 as defined above represent "primary" program goals related to impact while goals 2, 3, and 4 are what might be called "operational" or "instrumental" goals. The program's intrinsic logic seems to imply that if the operational goals are achieved--that is if truancy is reduced, if reading skills are improved, and if more positive self concepts are developed, then the primary goals of reduced street crime and successful functioning will be the result.

This suggests that the degree to which these different kinds of goals are met might be productively explored separately.

2.1.1.1 Operational Goals

One of the Exemplary Project Advisory Board's questions directly addresses one of the operational goals of PEC. The Advisory Board stated:

"The St. Louis (PEC) application cites improvement in the math and reading levels of Providence enrollees. Can any comparisons be made with average math and reading levels of other delinquent inner-city youth around the country?"

The data available from PEC shows that students enrolled in PEC made gains in math and reading achievement levels that appear to be modest. The average math level was raised from 3.6 to 4.5 while reading levels increased from an average 4.4 to 4.8. It may be useful to establish a context in which to interpret this data on achievement levels.

First, amount by which math and reading levels increased during enrollment in PEC is undoubtedly skewed downward by the fact that initial testing of students was performed at time of entry into the program (from September 5, 1972 to April 1, 1973) while the re-test was performed uniformly for all students in April, 1973. Thus achievement was measured for some students over a seven month period while for other students re-tests occurred over a shorter period. In some cases, less than two months elapsed between initial test and the re-test in April.

Secondly, "normal" progress over the seven month period from September to April would be an increase of .7, so that the .9 increase in math achievement exceeds "normal" expectations, and greatly exceeds them in light of the fact that not all students were enrolled for the full seven month period. The .4 increase in reading might be easily explained by the fluctuations in elapsed time between initial tests and the re-test. In this statistical context, the increases in both math and reading achievement seem to be relatively formidable.

During the on-site visit the URSA team requested data on students of a similar age and background in the St. Louis public schools. Although public school officials agreed to provide such data it has not been forthcoming. However, a negative indicator of average achievement levels in the St. Louis public schools is the fact that a 5.0 reading achievement level is sufficient to secure entry to high school.

Finally, in national terms although there is no data on the reading and math achievement levels of "delinquent" inner-city youth there is an abundance of data on achievement levels in inner-city schools. In most instances average reading levels in inner-city schools increase until the 3rd or 4th grade and then fall increasingly behind grade level until the 9th or 10th grade when average reading levels increase somewhat--an increase largely attributable to the fact that large numbers of the lowest achievers drop out at that grade level. In other words, the increase in achievement levels during the first year of PEC's operation seems to represent significant progress in comparison with public schools serving similar populations.

PEC's goal of reducing truancy was also clearly achieved. PEC's records indicate a truancy rate of 14% compared to a previous rate of 55% for the same students when they attended public schools. The 55% rate was based on pupil personnel records prepared by the public schools and submitted to PEC at the time of the initial referral.

PEC's progress in achieving the other two operational goals that are specified is more difficult to assess. The program has had some contact with the parents of all of the students. However, the extent, character, and quality of the contacts with parents is impossible to ascertain without an indepth review of the program. Similarly, the data needed to assess whether the self-concept of students is improved during enrollment was not available. However, the document titled "St. Louis High Impact Anti-Crime Program: Evaluation Component - Providence Education Center" (S-MP23-72-C3) indicated that all students should receive a pre-and post-test using the Bristol Social Adjustment

Guide. Presumably, then, this data will be available in the future.

2.1.1.2 "Primary" Impact Goals

The two primary or impact goals of the PEC program - as noted above - are to reduce street crime among students enrolled in PEC and to help them successfully adjust to public schools, vocational programs, or employment.

In this regard, the Exemplary Project Advisory Board asked:

"The Providence Educational Center appears to be achieving an impressive success rate . . . are these statistics accurate? What is the comparative effectiveness of other forms of treatment for juvenile offenders, e.g. Missouri Hills Home for Boys, Missouri State Training School at Booneville, Boys Town of Missouri, probation, other?"

PEC seems to have the only accurate data on recidivism in St. Louis. PEC has apparently taken great care in following up cases and collecting data on outcomes for ex-students. The high quality of the data and the fastidiousness displayed regarding its collection may be a function of the small number of youth who have been enrolled in the program to date (N=135). However, whatever the reason, comparable data is not available for the other treatment alternatives. There is no systematic data collection on juvenile court dispositions in St. Louis. According to court officials an effort is being made to compile such data, but it is not yet available. Thus, hard comparisons between PEC and other programs will have to wait until the MLEAC Region 5 staff implements its evaluation plan for juvenile services.

Nevertheless, it may be possible to make some rough comparisons on the basis of PEC's data and the estimates supplied by the juvenile court officers the URSA team interviewed.

To compute recidivism rates for PEC, URSA used data provided by PEC staff during the on-site visit. This data updates the statistical information related to recidivism included in PEC's application for exemplary status in two ways:

1. Data for the period from 9/10/73 to 12/3/73 was provided to supplement the data for the period 9/5/72 to 8/8/73 that was previously submitted to the Exemplary Project Advisory Board; and,
2. Data was provided on the After-Care component for the period from 6/1/73 (date of inception) to 12/3/73.

Thus, it was possible for URSA to compute recidivism rates for both PEC students and ex-students for the entire 15-month period of operation from 9/5/72 to 12/3/73. This data is summarized in Figure 2.1-A and the complete set of updated data is attached as Appendix I. The method URSA opted to use in computing recidivism was based on the total number of youth referred to court while enrolled at PEC or within the 6-month reporting period of the After-Care component. This means that the recidivism rates of 28.1% for all offenses and 11.9% for stranger-to-stranger crimes are slightly overstated since they include referrals that were dismissed, as well as referrals that failed to result in the issuance of a warrant. (Figure 2.1-B is a schematic flow diagram illustrating the volume and point of occurrence of recidivism in the PEC program between 9/72 and 12/73, and Figure 2.1-C provides detailed information on the character of offenses resulting in referrals during enrollment in PEC).

In contrast, juvenile court officers estimated that their formal repetition rate -- a somewhat softer measure -- approximates 65% to 70% for youth on probation and about 50% for those youth assigned to residential institutions. They did not have any way of estimating recidivism specifically related to impact crimes.

The supplementary data collected during the on-site visit by the URSA team includes information useful in assessing achievements related to PEC's other primary impact goal -- that is, to enable the successful reintegration and adjustment of youth to the public schools, vocational programs, and employment. Unfortunately, no comparable information is available for youth on probation or institutionalized in one of the residential facilities.

Figure 2.1-A
Summary of Recidivism Data
Source: PEC Statistics 1972-73 and 1973-74

9/5/72 - 12/3/73	Number	Total	%
Youth enrolled in PEC	135	135	100%
Youth referred to court while enrolled in PEC	35	38	28.1% Total Recidivism
Youth referred to court during After-Care	3		
Youth referred for impact crimes* while enrolled in PEC	13	16	11.9% Recidivism related to impact crimes
Youth referred for impact crimes* during After-Care	3		
Total referrals** to court during enrollment at PEC and during After-Care	57 3	60	
Impact referrals* during enrollment and during After-Care	20 3	23	38.3% of all referrals

* stranger-to-stranger

** including (7) referrals that were dismissed or where no warrants were issued

Figure 2.1-8
Recidivism Flow Diagram

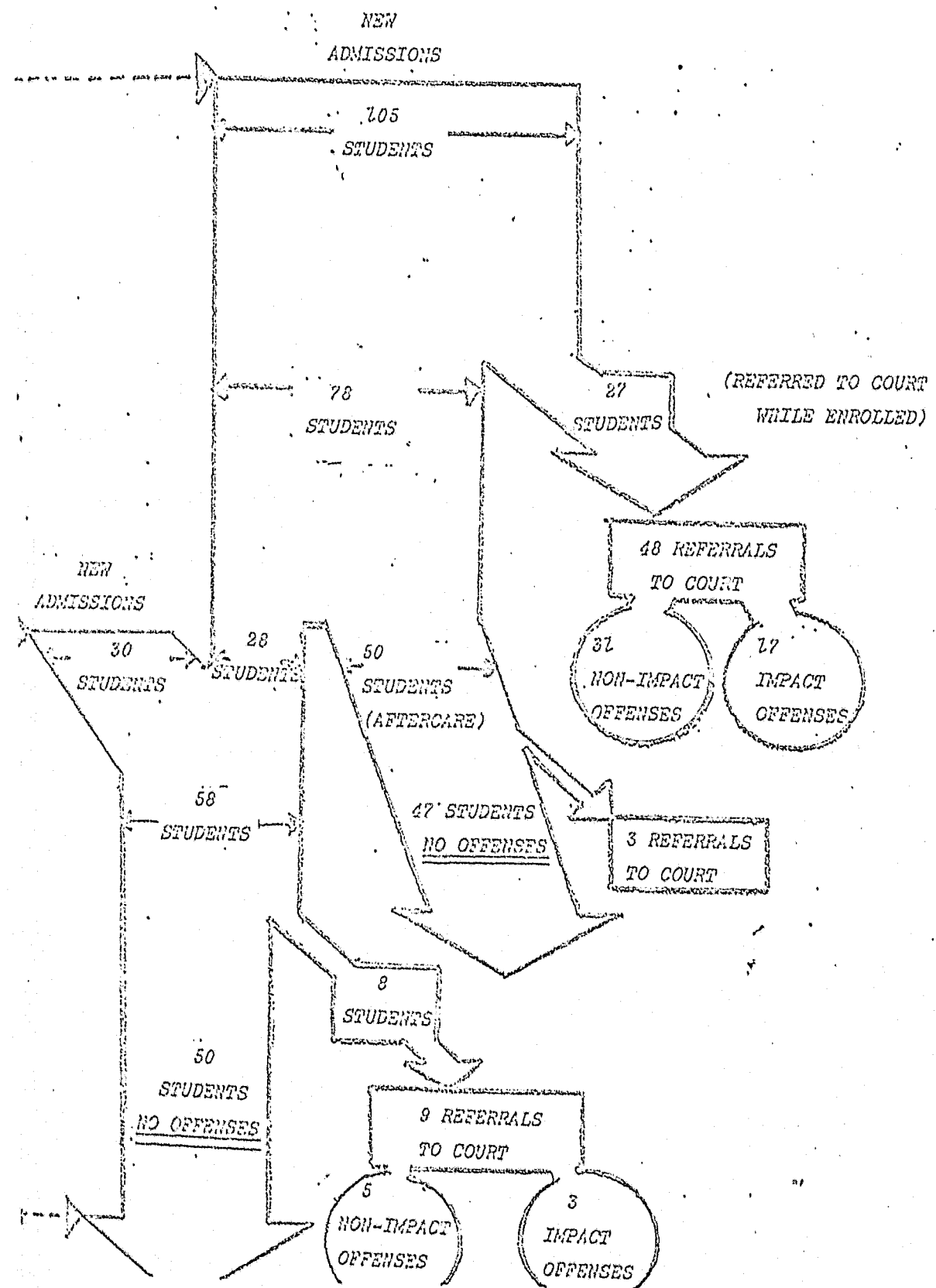


Figure 2.1-C

Categorization of Court Referrals of
Youth While Enrolled in PEC

Offenses 9/72-12/73	Number of Referrals
Burglary	13
AWITDCBH	1
Common Assault	4
Stealing U/\$50	6
Truancy	4
Shoplifting	3
Tampering W/Auto	5
Armed Robbery	2
Parole Violation	3
Incorrigible	7
Inhaling Fumes	4
Possession of Stolen Property	1
Neglect	2
Burglary & Stealing	1
Possession of Marijuana	1
Total Referrals*	57

* Three additional referrals were made of youth involved in After-Care after graduation from PEC to bring the total to 60 referrals associated with the 135 youths enrolled in PEC between 9/72 and 12/73.

Since September, 1972 a total of 135 youths have been enrolled by PEC. Of that number, 105 were enrolled during the program year extending from 9/5/72 to 8/8/73. Of that number, 27 were discharged by PEC during the year either because they were rearrested and institutionalized, because they left the St. Louis area, or because they were being served by another agency. (A detailed breakdown of the "outcomes" of those 27 cases is provided in Appendix I). In addition, another 50 of the 105 students enrolled during the first full program year "graduated" in June, 1973. Since that time, they have been served by the After-Care component of PEC's program (detail in Appendix I).

Thus, 77 of PEC's students either graduated or were terminated by the end of the program year 8/8/73. The remaining 28 students were joined by 30 new admissions during the fall of 1973 bringing total enrollment as of 12/3/73 to 58 and the cumulative total of enrollment to 135.

Of the 135 students, 56 or 41.5% are currently enrolled in and attending PEC; 44 or 32.6% are enrolled in public high schools and elementary schools; 5 or 3.7% are either enrolled in vocational and job training programs or employed.

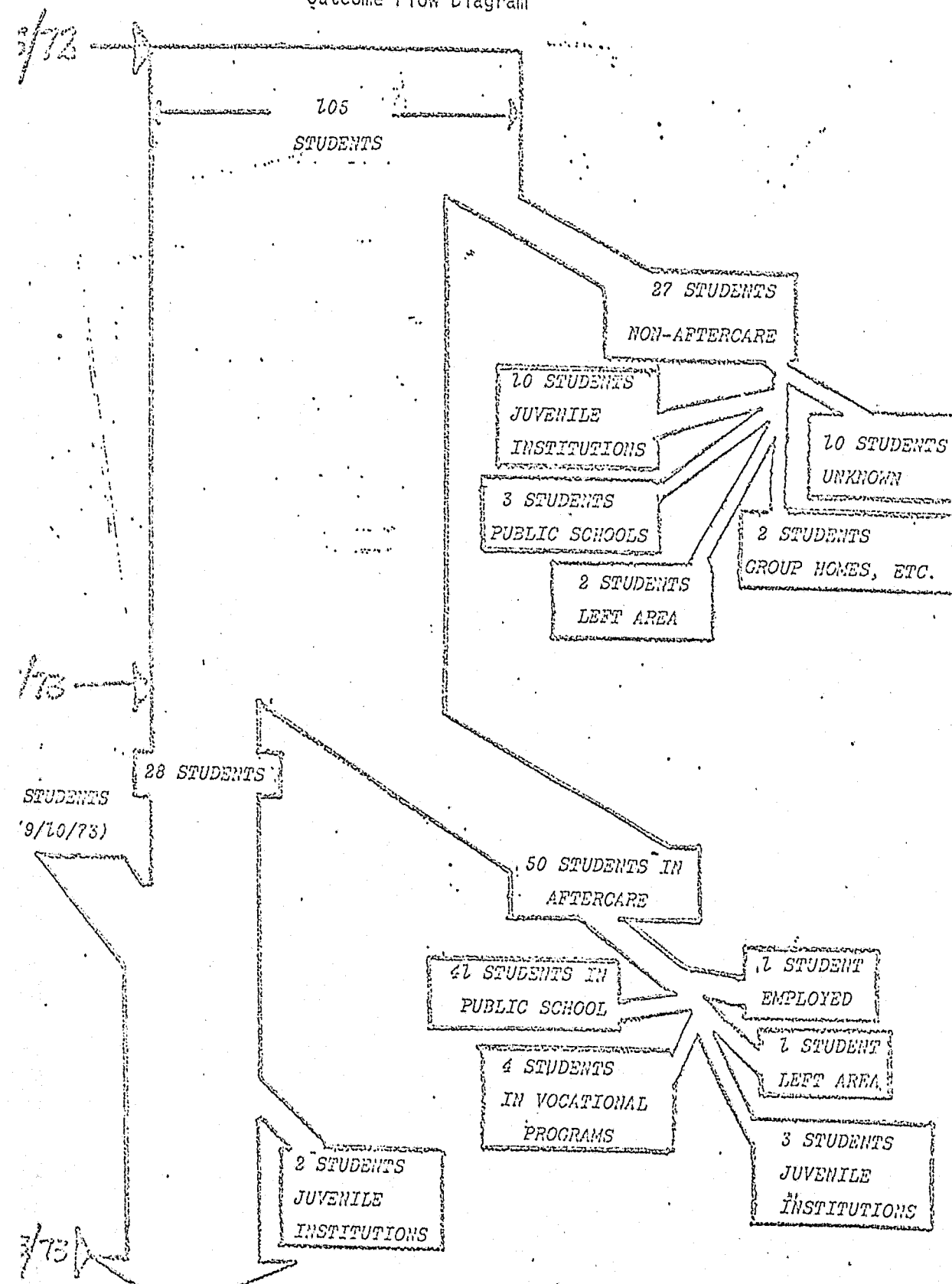
In addition, 2 or 1.4% of the ex-students are now enrolled in other non-residential programs, and 3 ex-students--or 2.2%-- moved outside of the City of St. Louis. The present activities of 10 ex-students--or 7.4%-- are unknown and 15 or 11.1% of PEC's ex-students are in other institutional settings including Missouri Hills, Booneville, Boys Town, and the State Hospital.

In sum, then, a total of 49 or 62.0% of those discharged or "graduated" from PEC are currently engaged in activities consonant with PEC's goals. ("Outcome" data is summarized in Figure 2.1-D and further detailed in Appendix I. Figure 2.1-E provides a schematic illustration of student flows through PEC and their relationship to "outcomes".)

Figure 2.1-D
Outcomes of Youth Enrolled in PEC

	Number	% of Cumulative Enrollment	% of Ex-Students
1) Total cumulative enrollment 9/72 - 12/73	135	100%	
2) Current enrollment (12/3/73)	56	41.5%	
3) Total ex-students	79	58.5%	100%
- not involved in After-Care	29	21.5%	36.7%
- involved in After-Care	50	37.0%	63.3%
4) Enrolled in public school	44	32.6%	55.7%
- left PEC for public school	3	2.2%	3.8%
- enrolled during After-Care	41	30.4%	51.9%
5) Enrolled in vocational program or employed	5	3.7%	6.3%
6) Enrolled in other non-residential programs	2	1.4%	2.5%
7) Moved from City of St. Louis	3	2.2%	3.8%
8) Institutionalized	15	11.1%	19.0%
- during PEC enrollment	12	8.9%	15.2%
- during After-Care	3	2.2%	3.8%
9) Present activities unknown	10	7.4%	12.7%

Figure 2.1-E
Outcome Flow Diagram



The Exemplary Project Advisory Board also raised another set of questions related to effectiveness and goal achievement when it asked:

"What criteria are used by the juvenile court in determining which youth go to Providence and which to one of the other forms of treatment for juvenile offenders? What criteria are used by the Providence staff in refusing to accept a youth into the program? What would have been the most likely disposition of youth in the Providence program if PEC did not exist? What is the percentage breakdown of crimes charged to youths in the program?"

The Providence Education Center seems to serve three functions:

1. It is an enriched educational program for some youth who are not charged with any specific offense, but who are sheltered in the Providence Group House (e.g., child neglect cases), or who have severe school-related problems.
2. It is a "probation plus" program for youth charged with truancy, incorrigibility, shoplifting, trespassing and other minor offenses.
3. It is an "alternative to institutionalization" for youth charged with more serious offenses including felonies and stranger-to-stranger crimes.

Figure 2.1-F details the charges associated with each youth's last referral to court prior to enrollment at Providence. Based on the data specified in Figure 2.1-F, 16 youths--or 11.9% of the cumulative total enrollment of 135 youths--were assigned to PEC on grounds of "neglect" or were referred to PEC by a source other than the court. Another 35 youths--or 25.9%--were assigned to Providence for essentially minor offenses including truancy, shoplifting, parole violation (normally two absences from a community work detail may constitute parole violation for a juvenile), inhaling fumes, trespassing, disturbing the peace, and incorrigibility. In these cases, PEC most clearly provided "probation plus" services. The remaining youth in the program--84 or 62.2%--were referred to PEC for a variety of more serious offenses ranging from stealing to armed robbery, simple assault to attempted forcible rape and homicide, and from destruction of property to arson. It is probable that in a substantial proportion of these cases,

Figure 2.1-F

Categorization of Last Referral to Court
Prior to Enrollment at Providence

Offense	Number of Referrals
Burglary	19
AWITDGBH	4
Common Assault	5
Stealing U/\$50	13
Truancy	8
Shoplifting	1
Tampering	2
Armed Robbery	1
Parole Violation	1
Incorrigible	17
Inhaling Fumes	4
Possession of Stolen Property	2
Neglect	13
Burglary & Stealing	12
Stealing O/\$50	6
Robbery	12
Peace Disturbance	3
Possession of Bomb	1
Destruction of Property	3
Arson	1
Flourishing a Dangerous & Deadly Weapon	1
Attempted Forcible Rape	1
Homicide	1
Trespassing	1
Sub-total (Court Referrals)	132
3 boys never known to court	+3
Grand Total	135

PEC serves as an active alternative to institutionalization. All in all, 41% of the 132 referrals from the court accepted by PEC were for impact crimes. In addition, 69% of the 135 youth in the program were charged with impact crimes at some time prior to their referral to PEC.

The criteria used by the court in determining which youth should be referred to PEC seemed vague, informal, and subjective. The most common criteria mentioned by court officials referred to the judgement exercised by the juvenile officers--"a child is sent to Providence if the probation staff believes that he will benefit from the program there." In the view of one juvenile court officer, the basic criterion was the degree of aggressiveness of the youth--with "non-aggressive" youth being sent to PEC and the "hard cases" being referred to Booneville or Missouri Hills Home for Boys. The data summarized in Figure 2.1-F seems to call this view into question since a number of offenses associated with aggressive behaviour (assault with intent, common assault, and armed robbery) were charged to youth assigned to PEC.

Nor did the Executive Director and staff at PEC have a firm set of insights about the criteria used by the courts, although one PEC staff member expressed the opinion that the juvenile court was becoming more "legalistic" and tending to refer more youth--particularly recidivists and youth charged with impact crimes--to Missouri Hills and Booneville. At the same time, though, he mentioned that several PEC students had been at Booneville prior to their referral to PEC.

The criteria PEC uses in assessing the eligibility of youths for entry into the PEC program are highly explicit:

1. The program is for males 12 to 16 years old;
2. Youths admitted to the program must be adjudicated and on probation;
3. Youths admitted to the program must have had a history of previous school problems;
4. Youths who are severely retarded are not accepted by PEC although assessment of retardation is not based on standard intelligence test scores;

5. Youths who are severely handicapped are not eligible; and,
6. Youths accepted in the program must be reading on a "pre-High School" level (less than a 5.0 reading achievement level on the Iowa Basic).

Between 9/10/73 and 12/3/73, PEC received a total of 34 new court initiated referrals. Thirty were accepted into the program. Of the 4 referrals that were refused, 3 were refused because the youths were too old and had 8th grade certificates from the public school, and 1 youth was refused because he was too young.

Criteria for acceptance to PEC are not based on the character of the offense or on the previous records of juvenile offenders. PEC has in the past accepted a range of different types of offenders and staff indicated not only openness, but an eagerness to continue to do so.

2.2 Measureability

The Missouri Law Enforcement Assistance Council (MLEAC), Region 5, is the RPU with responsibility for the St. Louis area. MLEAC Region 5 is developing an evaluation design for the St. Louis High Impact Anti-Crime Program. Evaluation of the PEC will be conducted by MLEAC's Evaluation Unit as part of the overall evaluation of the Anti-Crime Program. The evaluation design for PEC has been drafted and a copy is attached as Appendix II. The two primary data collection instruments that will be used, PEC-1 and PEC-2, have been designed and are scheduled for use as of February 15, 1974.

The ability of MLEAC's Evaluation Unit to compare PEC's effectiveness with other juvenile treatment programs (in terms of impact on recidivism) and with the public schools (in terms of impact on achievement levels) will depend heavily on the availability of data from those sources. MLEAC's evaluation design seems cognizant of this fact; it mentions, for example, that it may not be possible to obtain standardized results from the public schools.

However, even if comparative data is not available from other criminal justice, correctional and educational agencies, it should be possible to

evaluate--at the very least--changes in behavior, attitude, performance, and achievement among PEC students on a longitudinal basis.

In URSA's opinion, the evaluation component designed by MLEAC Region 5 for PEC is capable of yielding data on PEC's effectiveness--if exogenous factors are ignored and attribution is assumed. It is not, however, sophisticated enough to establish the validity of the conceptual logic of PEC's overall approach. That is, the proposed evaluation should be capable of measuring or--minimally--indicating the extent to which PEC is effective, but it will not significantly advance the "state of the art."

Finally, URSA would recommend several modifications in the way PEC now analyzes and displays its data that should allow for a slightly more sophisticated assessment of internal effectiveness.

1. PEC's data on recidivism should be grouped by previous-offense in order to identify any internal trends. For example, are youth referred to PEC for an "impact crime" more likely or less likely to commit another "impact crime" than youth referred to PEC for a non-impact crime. Utilization of the matrix illustrated in Figure 2.2-A would display the data needed to analyze any such trends.
2. Data reported on the basis of "averages" (e.g., "average" number of days absent or "average" reading score improvement) should be reported as medians as well and ranges should be established. In some instances, modes might be useful.
3. Data should be reported and displayed by PEC in cumulative form as well as by reporting period since all of the data presented is not simply additive.
4. Factor analysis of some of the case data PEC now has might yield insights useful to PEC's administrators in grouping youth, identifying characteristics associated with success at PEC, and in determining which aspects of the program to emphasize in terms of resource allocations and allocations of time in the daily or weekly schedule.

Figure 2.2-A

Matrix for Display of Data on Prior Court Referrals and
Court Referrals Subsequent to Enrollment in PEC

Group	Total # in Group	Number of Referrals During Enrollment		Number of Referrals After Dis- charge or Graduation from PEC	
		Impact	Non-Impact	Impact	Non-Impact
I. Youth referred to PEC for "im- pact" offenses					
II. Youth referred to PEC for non- "Impact" offenses but with a prior record of Impact offenses.					
III. Youth re- ferred for non- Impact offenses and with no prior record of Impact offenses					
IV. Youth referred to PEC and never charged with any offense					

5. Utilization of a simple "self-anchoring" in conjunction with the Bristol Social Adjustment Guide could, with little extra effort, yield information on the relationship between fluctuations and trends in self-concept and similar trends in the social adjustment of PEC's students.

2.3 Efficiency

The Exemplary Projects Advisory Board posed the following questions regarding program efficiency:

"Is the program run economically? Are the cost comparisons with other Missouri juvenile institutions accurate?"

PEC's application for Exemplary Project status included information on PEC's costs as compared to the costs of other juvenile treatment and rehabilitation programs in St. Louis. That data is presented as Figure 2.3-A.

The URSA team asked MLEAC Region 5 for data on the costs of programs for youth in the area but MLEAC did not have that information available. The source of the information cited in Figure 2.3-A was the administrator in charge of each of the institutions listed (Missouri Hills, Missouri State Training School at Booneville, and Boys Town). It is, therefore, probably a reasonably accurate statement of operational costs per child.

In fact, the data in Figure 2.3-A probably understates PEC's position vis à vis other juvenile institutions. The figures for Missouri Hills and for at least part of the youth served by Boys Town would be considerably higher if they provided an enriched, intensive educational program similar to PEC's. It is not unreasonable, for example, to assume that if the cost of the educational program supplied by the St. Louis Board of Education were assigned a dollar value and attributed to Missouri Hills, the per capita cost there would increase by \$1500 to \$2000. And in order to provide a program similar to PEC's, Missouri Hills' costs would approach the costs at Booneville.

Figure 2.3-A

Comparative Costs of Juvenile
Treatment Institutions in the St. Louis Area

Missouri Hills Home for Boys	\$ 6,800 ¹
Missouri State Training School at Booneville, Missouri	11,000
Boys Town of Missouri	6,700 ²
Providence Educational Center	3,309 ³
Providence Group Home	4,953 ⁴

¹ St. Louis public institutions for delinquent males: cost does not include salaries or operating expenses for on-ground educational programs which are paid for by the St. Louis Board of Education.

² Private residential and educational programs for boys located in St. Louis, Missouri: cost derived from general operating expenses for center in S. James and a group home in St. Louis which uses local public school for education.

³ Cost includes all federal and local dollar contributions, with the exception of major, one-time expenses divided by one hundred clients.

⁴ Providence House is the second component of the Providence Inner-City Program. The twelve residents attend Providence Educational Center and receive residential and social services twenty-four hours a day.

Internally, the URSA team found PEC's program efficient. There was no evidence of any duplication of staff services or underutilization of staff--in fact, the full talents and resources of all staff seemed to be drawn upon. For example, one member of the maintenance staff conducts the electronics workshop, and the cook seemed to be a major source of maternal affection and discipline for the students. PEC's record keeping procedures and procedures for exercising controls on costs were outstanding. Most of the information requested by the URSA team during the on-site visit was readily retrievable and available in the format requested overnight. Staff morale was high--although relationships were clearly established primarily on a professional rather than a social basis. Relationships between staff and students seemed to be warm. The staff knew all of the students by name and students called staff by their first names. Finally, the aimlessness of the students wandering through hallways or loitering in and around the building that is so characteristic of many inner-city High Schools was not at all evidenced at PEC.

2.4 Replicability

In assessing PEC's potential for replication in other communities, the URSA team considered seven factors:

1. The extent to which need for PEC-type programs exist in other communities;
2. PEC's organizational structure;
3. PEC's location and facility;
4. PEC's staff
5. PEC's educational and counseling methods and materials;
6. Community support and cooperation;
7. PEC's financial structure and budget.

In each instance the URSA team was interested in determining whether other communities might reasonably expect to duplicate the context in which PEC functions and draw upon similar resources or identify equally effective alternatives.

In general, the URSA team concluded that PEC is applicable to and replicable in most urban areas and would be relevant for rural areas with populations similar to PEC's student body as well. The specifics leading to this conclusion are discussed below.

2.4.1 Extent of Need

Need can be considered from two perspectives; first, in terms of the prevalence in other communities of populations similar to that served by PEC, and second, in terms of the need for programs like PEC to serve those populations.

PEC's target population consists primarily of 12 to 16 year old male adjudicated delinquents who have a previous history of school-related problems. The program accepts both first offenders and recidivists, and youth charged with both misdemeanors and felonies. A small minority of the youth in the program have never had contact with the court or are wards of the court who are not offenders.

PEC's service population is almost entirely black--(only two white youths have ever been referred to the program)--although PEC staff and court officers attribute this fact to residential segregation rather than court policy. With the exception of some classroom hours devoted to black history and culture, however, there is nothing in PEC's program that would restrict its relevance to any group of youths. PEC's staff characterized the youth served by the program as:

- "hungry" for attention and direction;
- limited to physical or other conflict based approaches to conflict resolution;
- lacking in structure and a sense of causation and consequences;
- "failures" in terms of their criminal activities, interpersonal and intrafamilial relationships, and in terms of their interactions with institutions;
- "turned off" and behind in school in terms of reading and math achievement levels and their ability to perform adequately in other academic areas;

- oriented to delinquent peer relationships;
- lacking self-confidence.

Most of PEC's student body come from low-income single parent families--often dependent on public assistance.

Youth populations similar to PEC's student body can be found in every urban area of the country,--and in some rural areas as well. Nor does the youth population with these characteristics need to be large to justify the development and implementation of programs like PEC. The administrators and staff of PEC stressed the importance of both a student body small enough for every student to be known by every staff member and a small student to teacher ratio (6:1 in PEC's case).

In instances where a large potential service population exists, a series of separate treatment modules--each operating like a mini-PEC--would be more desirable than a single large institution. In the opinion of the URSA team, the upper size limit would need to be defined by level of effectiveness but in no case would it be expected to exceed 200 students. The lower limit, on the other hand, would be defined more likely by economic feasibility and would probably range from a total of 50 to 60 students.

The usual alternatives to PEC-type programs for youth similar to those served by PEC are:

- probation and continued enrollment in a public school;
- probation and employment;
- incarceration in a residential treatment facility.

PEC seems to offer clear and substantial advantages over each of these options--primarily in the area of effectiveness. The success rate of PEC--in terms of recidivism--is significantly better than that achieved by either probation programs or residential treatment

programs. At the same time, compared to residential programs for delinquent youth PEC offers the advantage of major cost savings while it keeps youth in contact with their families and communities and "treats" the entire family unit. On the other hand, compared to probation programs based on use of the regular public schools, PEC--while it is probably more expensive--offers an individually oriented enriched remedial program that seems to be much more effective than the public schools in raising achievement levels.

In summary, then, the existence on a widespread basis of substantial "populations in need" and the limited effectiveness of the standard approaches to treatment may well justify the dissemination of information about PEC to other communities and encouragement of attempts to replicate PEC's program.

2.4.2 PEC's Organizational Structure

PEC is sponsored by a private non-profit organization located outside of and independent of the aegis of the courts or other agencies within the criminal justice system. Its relationship with the court is contractual,--the court contracts for PEC's services, but the Board of Directors of PEC sets policy, establishes and approves the budget, and hires and fires the Executive Director.

After reviewing PEC's structure and the organizational relationships between PEC and the Court, the URSA team concluded that there was no particular advantage to be gained by structuring the program in this way. And, in fact, in St. Louis this structure (e.g., the court subcontracting with a private non-profit organization) seemed fortuitous rather than conscious. In the opinion of the URSA team, PEC-type programs might well be sponsored by school systems, juvenile agencies--including residential treatment facilities, other public agencies (e.g. mental health agencies), or directly by the court itself as well as by private voluntary agencies. The major considerations would need to be an assurance of motivated and committed staff, counseling and after-care components that are functionally

well integrated with the educational component, and a student-teacher ratio approximating that at PEC.

Given adherence to these basic conditions programs patterned after PEC's might be sponsored and administered by a wide variety of public and private agencies--even within the same city.

2.4.3 PEC's Location and Facility

PEC is located in the predominantly black North St. Louis community near the Pruitt-Igoe housing project. It is a typical mid-western inner-city area. The PEC building fronts on a major street and does not have extensive ground although there is some concrete playspace and parking in the rear. The building itself--formerly a small Catholic High School is unpretentious and not subject to notice. PEC blends into the neighborhood well.

The facility is a typical school. It has a lot of space inside--probably more than PEC actually needs. There are a number of large classrooms, the reading laboratory, the curriculum center, workshops, administrative and staff offices, a student lounge, a kitchen and lunchroom, and a full-sized gymnasium with a stage.

PEC's program does not require any particular design features or any particular types of space or unusual equipment. The program could operate in "general purpose" or "multi-purpose" rooms for the most part--the gym, for example, is useful but not necessary.

In other communities, the program could be operated in a variety of different facilities and a range of different kinds of facilities (e.g. storefronts, schools, recreation agencies, houses or apartment buildings, etc.) could be modified to accommodate the program.

Most of the youth enrolled in PEC do not live in the neighborhood immediately around PEC so it is not necessarily community based. It could be in another location as long as transportation was convenient or provided by the program.

2.4.4 PEC's Staff

The Exemplary Project Advisory Board expressed particular interest in PEC's staff and asked:

- "What is the relative importance of staff competence and commitment to the success of the program?"

The URSA team considered PEC's staff from two vantage points: one, staff characteristics, and, two, staff qualifications.

The staff consists of the Executive Director and administrative support personnel including clerical and secretarial staff and a business manager; teachers, a Principal, a curriculum coordinator and specialists (reading, physical education, etc.); the counseling staff and a Director of Social Services; and, maintenance and operational personnel responsible for overall maintenance and care of the facility and for the operation of the cafeteria.

The essential characteristics that PEC Executive Director, Joseph Ryan, reported that he considers in hiring new staff are:

- relevance of educational background and professional skill;
- maturity (in terms of patience and an ability to serve as "adult" behavioral model);
- ability to be a role model that youth in the program might identify with or relate to;
- relevant work and "life" experience in terms of factors such as knowledge of street language, cultural adaptivity, and acceptance;
- motivation and energy.

A profile of PEC's current professional staff (administrators, educators, and counselors) indicates that it is about equally divided between men and women with an ethnic composition that is roughly 55% black and 45% white. In terms of age, it is probably skewed more towards the 20's and 30's than most public school systems which frequently still tend to be dominated by normal

school graduates in their late forties and fifties. PEC's staff does have some older staff as well, however, including one teacher who retired after 20 years in the public school system.

All of the professional staff have degrees related to their area of work--primarily degrees in elementary and secondary education for teaching staff, and degrees in the social sciences for counseling and social work staff. Two of the three social work staff members and the Executive Director also have had experience as juvenile court officers. One of the staff--the Principal--has a Ph.D. and several other staff members including the Curriculum Coordinator have degrees at the Master's level. Approximately 40% of the professional staff have had only one to two years of teaching or counseling experience--primarily at Providence. The remaining 60% is about evenly divided between teachers and counselors with three to four years of experience, five to ten years, and ten or more years of relevant experience. This distribution is related to the age skewing noted earlier and is also unlike most urban public school systems.

PEC's staff is also highly motivated. The URSA team was impressed with the sense of mission and personal commitment revealed by all of the staff members who were interviewed. This attitude is also in marked contrast to the general atmosphere and morale levels commonly found among public school teachers.

However, despite these clear and important differences between PEC's staff and the staff of public school systems, the URSA team concluded that staff similar to PEC's staff in terms of qualifications, experience, commitment, and other relevant personal characteristics could be assembled in most urban communities without undue difficulty.

2.4.5 PEC's Methods and Materials

The methods and materials used by PEC are in common use in numerous public and private schools and agencies throughout the country. In fact, there are some materials that would be potentially beneficial for PEC that the staff was not aware of. Time and funds for the curriculum coordinator to conduct a "search" for relevant materials through the ERIC system, and an opportunity to contact Elementary and Secondary Education ACT Title IV Regional Laboratories and the major curriculum development efforts funded by the Rockefeller, Carnegie, and Ford Foundations could yield additional materials and learning modules suitable for PEC's students.

PEC's approach is unique in two ways, however. The integration of teachers and social workers into classroom teams seems to be an effective way of addressing in a coordinated way the total system needs of the youth in the program. Secondly, the emphasis that PEC places on the development of very explicit short term and long-range goals related to each of the five "primary systems" that form the context in which each youth functions is unusual, as is the commitment to regular review of progress and updating of the treatment plan for each boy in the program.

The skills involved in effectively utilizing these methods can readily be developed through in-service or pre-service training programs, however.

2.4.6 Community Support and Cooperation

The Exemplary Project Advisory Board raised the following question with regard to relationships between PEC and the community:

"What has been the community's reaction to the program? Was there any resistance to the establishment of the Center? Can lessons be drawn for other communities?"

The URSA team assessed community reaction to PEC on two levels. First, at the level of the larger St. Louis community, and secondly, at the neighborhood level.

Praise for PEC's program is fairly universal at the larger community level. Law enforcement and correctional officials all seemed pleased with the program and expressed the opinion that it was effective and met real needs. The Director of the Missouri Hills Home for Boys--who might be viewed as part of the "competition"--held the program in high regard.

This support is undoubtedly based on PEC's reputation for effectiveness and good administration. However, it is also undoubtedly encouraged by the fact that PEC's Board consists of people who are very active and reputable civic leaders with access to key community decision makers. Further evidence of the influence of PEC's Board,--in addition to support expressed by the law enforcement and criminal justice communities--can be found in PEC's ability to obtain volunteers through the Junior League and donations of goods and equipment from a broad spectrum of businesses in the community.

At the grassroots level,--that is, in the neighborhood immediately surrounding PEC--community reaction appears to be neutral. There was no resistance to the establishment of the Center. Many residents of the community still seem to think of PEC as a parochial school. PEC also maintains a low profile--it does not stand out physically from the surrounding area--and the neighborhood in general seems to be tolerant to anonymity. The fact that PEC was originally a church related institution and has gone through its metamorphosis quietly certainly has contributed to at least passive acceptance by the community as has the involvement of some neighborhood folk on the maintenance and operational staff.

Most of the staff does not live in the immediate community, however, and a number of the students commute to PEC by public transportation each day. To that extent, PEC is not a community-based program.

Nevertheless, PEC's top level staff feels that PEC should become more actively involved in the immediate community and more aggressive in drawing upon neighborhood resources--particularly as part of a proposed on-the-job training program involving some local businesses.

2.5 Accessibility

URSA considered two aspects of the issue of accessibility: potential for continuity, and "fragility," that is, the extent to which the program is able to withstand functional disruption in the face of demands for time, attention, and information by on-site visitors interested in replicating PEC.

URSA concluded that PEC will probably continue to be funded by local sources after their LEAA grant period ends--particularly if they are designated as an Exemplary Project.

PEC has three assets that led the URSA team to this conclusion:

1. As noted above in the section on Efficiency (Section 2.3) PEC seems to offer potential for substantial cost savings and increased effectiveness when compared to most alternative juvenile treatment programs. The high multiplier involved in PEC's cost benefit ratio should serve the program in good stead when local funding commitments have to be made;
2. PEC's Board of Directors, as noted earlier, is influential among the civic elite in St. Louis; and,
3. PEC has the kind of competent administrative leadership required to compete with other agencies for tax funds.

URSA also felt that PEC is not fragile and would not be damaged by extensive on-site visitations and observations. There is staff available at the administrative and coordinative levels of the program who are capable of handling visitors and providing basic information, and PEC is well enough organized to structure any

observations of program activities that might be required in unobtrusive ways.

PEC staff felt that they had an investment in PEC's application for Exemplary status, and expressed a willingness in and enthusiasm for sharing their skills and insights with others.

3.0 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

In this section, the URSA team will attempt to identify particular strengths in the program and to identify areas that might be improved upon by communities replicating PEC's program.

3.1 Strengths

Most of the features in PEC's program that URSA considers to be either unique or programmatically strong have been mentioned in earlier sections of this report. They are:

1. The close integration of counselors with teachers on classroom teams;
2. The strong focus on individualized treatment plans, and the commitment to regular review of progress towards achievement of short term goals, and to updating of each student's treatment plan;
3. The evident commitment and competence of PEC's staff and administrators;
4. The small size of the total student enrollment and maintenance of low student-teacher ratios;
5. The ability of PEC's administrators to use both the financial and the human resources of the program effectively without administrative rigidity.

In addition the URSA team feels that there are several other features of PEC's program that deserve to be singled out for attention.

The After-Care component is a particularly strong feature of the program that is unusual in juvenile programs, although it is conceptually consistent with the emerging concern in adult corrections with ex-offender programs and other programs designed to ease the reintegration of offenders into their communities. PEC has not yet had sufficient experience to determine how long various boys need support from the After-Care staff, but it was estimated that the period of transition and readjustment could take as long as one year.

The URSA team felt that the After-Care component probably did not have sufficient resources at present and if it expanded through new "graduations" before a commensurate number of youth made successful transitions back into the community the present staff could be severely overloaded. The URSA team also felt that the After-Care component might profitably consider ways of structuring activities so that peer values and mores developed during each student's enrollment in PEC can be drawn upon to supplement the support for ex-students provided by the staff. Periodic "reunions" of ex-students and other planned activities as well as on-going periodic, but regular, group counseling sessions might serve to achieve this end.

The other major strength that URSA identified is the fact that PEC's staff and administration view PEC as a program that is still developing. That is, in their minds, it has not yet taken final shape and they are continually assessing data and information about the program, the students, and the staff and modifying the program in light of their learnings. The After-Care component is one example of this kind of programmatic response to newly identified needs, and the move to team teaching is another example. This type of flexibility and commitment to analytic self-evaluation and modification is a strong indicator of a program's vitality.

3.2 Weaknesses

Again, URSA has indicated what some of PEC's current weaknesses are in earlier sections of this report. They are:

1. The need for additional attention to the collection, display, and analysis of hard data on the project.
In URSA's opinion some of the measures defined in MLEAC's evaluation plan need to be expanded upon and new data display formats need to be developed;
2. The curriculum specialist--as noted earlier--needs an opportunity to search and identify additional materials.

3.3 General Comments

In comparison with the other more traditional treatment and prevention programs available for delinquent youth in St. Louis, PEC is clearly both a more effective and a more cost efficient model. However, it is still an open question whether the PEC model is more effective and/or more efficient ~~and/or more efficient~~ than other models of delinquency treatment programs that are also non-traditional, but that are conceptually different from PEC as well.

That is, if the Exemplary Project Advisory Board is interested in identifying and encouraging replication of the one or two programmatic models that are most effective in reducing recidivism among adjudicated delinquent youth, there is no evidence that PEC meets that standard. If, on the other hand, the Advisory Board is primarily interested in identifying a range of various effective models that allow communities in search of alternatives to select the model most appropriate for local conditions, needs, and audiences, then PEC should probably be one of the available alternative models.

In URSA's opinion, the success of the PEC program argues strongly for educational reform. That is, PEC seems to represent the kind of program that public school systems should inaugurate to serve all youth with school-related problems and poor achievement levels whether they are delinquent or not. If PEC is designated as an Exemplary Project, this may suggest that some attention be given to consciously involving public school systems as sponsors and program operators in some of the communities selected for replication.

END

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