

State of Louisiana TANF Evaluation

Year 3 Evaluation of TANF Initiatives Programs

Louisiana Community and Technical College System
Department of Public Safety and Corrections
Pre-Release Skills Program

September 2004

Submitted to:

State of Louisiana, Division of Administration
TANF Executive Office of Oversight and Evaluation
1201 North Third Street, Room 7-230
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Submitted by:

Berkeley Policy Associates
440 Grand Avenue, Suite 500
Oakland, CA 94610



Author of this report

Maria Muñiz

Acknowledgments

BPA benefited from the advice and cooperation of numerous staff at state agencies and program sites during the preparation of this report. BPA thanks the Louisiana Division of Administration, TANF Executive Office of Oversight and Evaluation, Director Dana Reichert and Karen Jackson for their support and guidance throughout this study. We also thank the Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), especially Jacqueline Horton for her assistance and support in coordinating this year's evaluation of the Pre-Release Program, and Carol Hebert for her assistance with the collection of workplace literacy data. BPA thanks all of the Pre-Release programs for providing us with valuable information for this study, and in particular staff of the following programs for participating in interviews: LTC Folkes/ Dixon Correctional Institute (DCI), Louisiana State Penitentiary (LSP) and Elayn Hunt Correctional Center (EHCC); LTC Alexandria/J. Levy Debadie Correctional Center; and LTC Shelby M. Jackson/Concordia Parish Correctional Facility. We would also like to thank the Department of Public Safety and Corrections for assistance with data collection for this report.

Yasuyo Abe, Alexa Frankenberg, Chris Furguile and Fannie Tseng provided consultation and programming support. Mary Moore provided data entry support. Patricia Spikes Calvin produced the report, with support from Sabrina Williams.

Contents

Foreword.....	ii
Key Findings.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Program Overview and Design.....	3
Program Implementation.....	7
Program Outcomes.....	27
Conclusion.....	35
Appendix.....	37

Foreword

Under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, states are allowed to use federal TANF block grant funds to support a variety of programs targeting needy families beyond the traditional welfare-eligible population. Availing itself of the flexibility allowed under TANF, the Louisiana State Legislature allocated a sizable amount of the state's unspent federal TANF funds, starting in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2002, to a variety of programs known collectively as the TANF Initiatives. The total allocations amounted to \$105 million in FFY 2002 and \$160 million in FFY 2003. In its third year (FFY 2004), the TANF Initiatives consist of over 20 programs administered by 11 state agencies with a total budget of \$127 million.

For the past three years, Berkeley Policy Associates, a social policy research and consulting firm in Oakland, California, has conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the State of Louisiana's TANF-funded programs under contract with the Division of Administration. Included in this evaluation are the state welfare programs administered by the Department of Social Services (the Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program and the Strategies to Empower People Program) as well as selected programs under the TANF Initiatives Program. The third year evaluation of the TANF Initiatives covers the following programs: After Schools for All Program and Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program (the Department of Education), Tuition and Upgrade Programs (the Workforce Commission and the Louisiana Community and Technical College System), Post Release Skills Program (the Department of Public Safety and Correction), Pre Release Program for Incarcerated Fathers (the Louisiana Community and Technical College System), Substance Abuse Treatment and Rehabilitation Program (the Department of Health and Hospitals) and Drug Court Program (the Louisiana Supreme Court). The current report represents one in a series of the Year 3 TANF Initiatives Evaluation Reports.

Key Findings

- The Pre-Release program exceeded, as of June 2004, its annual participation target of 900 inmates and served more inmates than it did at the same time last year, despite having lost one third of its funding.
- The majority of individuals who exited the Pre-Release program received training in: workplace literacy, work readiness, life and technical skills training. Over half received training in basic skills.
- One quarter of program participants who were released from prison obtained employment in the quarter they were released.
- Individuals who obtained employment had average earnings of \$2,617 for the quarter in which they were released.
- The recidivism rate of Pre-Release program participants released in 2003 was eight percentage points lower than the recidivism rate of the total prison population.
- Analysis of workplace literacy data suggests that program participants experienced gains in their workplace literacy skills.
- Preliminary analysis suggests that for the most part, the Pre-Release program either met or exceeded its performance targets.

Introduction

Approximately 15,000 individuals are released from prison in Louisiana every year, and after five years, half of those individuals return to prison for either having violated the conditions of their release or for committing a new offense.¹ The Pre-Release Skills Training Program, henceforth referred to as the Pre-Release program, is a TANF Initiative designed to prepare incarcerated fathers for release and provide them with the necessary skills to make a successful transition to society and achieve greater independence upon release. A total of \$2

¹ Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections. *A Brief Analysis of Correctional Re-entry Issues*. [Electronic Version] Retrieved Aug 2004, from: <http://www.corrections.state.la.us/CORe/Core%20Summary.pdf>

million in TANF Initiatives funds were allocated to the Pre-Release program in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2004. This constituted a decrease of \$1 million from the \$3 million allocated to the program in FFY 2003.

Exhibit 1
Pre-Release Program Summary Table

Contract Agency:	Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS)
Initiative Grant Amount:	\$2,000,000
Expenditures:	\$1,240,272 (as of 7/31/04)
Program Background and Services:	The LCTCS in collaboration with the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections (DPS&C) provides basic, technical, workplace literacy, work readiness and life skills training to incarcerated fathers, who are the parents of a minor child, to support these individuals in making a successful transition to society upon release.
Subcontractors:	LCTCS enters into contracts with individual Louisiana Technical College (LTC) campuses to provide education and training services at federal, state and local correctional facilities.
Initiative Locations:	Local LTC campuses provide services at twelve state and parish correctional facilities across the state.
Eligibility:	Incarcerated male inmates that are parents of dependent children, have served the majority of their sentence and are nearing release.
Total Number of Individuals Served:	Targeted= 900 (over the course of the program year) Actual = 949 as of 6/30/04

The Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), a statewide system of community and technical colleges specializing in adult workforce training and education, is responsible for overseeing the Pre-Release program. State-level LCTCS administrators work in collaboration with the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections (DPS&C) and local Louisiana Technical College (LTC) campuses to provide customized workplace literacy, technical skills, workplace readiness, life skills, and basic skills training to incarcerated fathers nearing release.

This report presents findings of the evaluation of the TANF Initiatives Pre-Release program. The information provided in this report is based on a combination of data sources, including program administrative data, interviews with LCTCS staff, DPS&C staff, and staff of the following pre-release programs: LTC Folkes/ Dixon Correctional Institute (DCI), Louisiana State Penitentiary (LSP) and Elayn Hunt Correctional Center (EHCC); LTC Alexandria/J. Levy Debadie Correctional Center; and LTC Shelby M. Jackson/Concordia Parish Correctional Facility.

The report begins with a description of the Pre-Release program and the programmatic changes/enhancements implemented during this latest year of operation. It continues with a description of program participants and the services provided to them through the Pre-Release program. The study concludes with an examination of employment, recidivism and education outcomes of program participants.

Program Overview and Design

The Pre-Release program provides incarcerated fathers with a range of educational and training services, including: (1) workplace literacy instruction, (2) technical skills training, (3) work readiness instruction, (4) life skills training and (5) basic skills training. These course offerings, specifically the workplace literacy, work readiness, and life skills training go beyond the existing non-TANF pre-release training programs at state level correctional facilities in Louisiana.

Most state level correctional facilities in Louisiana have a three-month pre-release training program that inmates are required to participate in as they near release. The training covers basic survival skills upon release (e.g. communication, job search, money management, parenting/family relations), but only offers 100 hours of training. The TANF funded Pre-Release program not only has the advantage of offering more than 100 hours of training, it also provides inmates with a wider range of training opportunities (e.g. the fatherhood

curriculum, workplace literacy, technical skills and basic skills training) that goes beyond those offered at state level correctional facilities' non- TANF pre-release programs.

In addition to augmenting existing pre-release training programs at correctional facilities, the TANF Initiatives funding provides correctional facilities without existing pre-release or educational training programs with much needed resources to finance inmate skills training. In the absence of TANF Initiatives funds several correctional facilities will no longer offer any technical skills, work readiness or workplace literacy training to inmates.

Description of Pre-Release Programs

In the third year (FFY 2004) of the Pre-Release program and second year of oversight by the LCTCS, nine LTC campuses and one Technical Community College were awarded grants by the LCTCS to provide customized skills training to incarcerated fathers at twelve correctional facilities throughout Louisiana (see Exhibit 2).² Pre-Release programs are operating at all of the correctional facilities that were participating in program year two. This year's programs are being managed by nine of the eleven LTC campuses that were providing TANF-funded pre-release training services in program year two.³

Program Eligibility

The target population for the Pre-Release program is adult male inmates, who are housed in state or local facilities, are the parent of a dependent/minor child 19 years old or younger, and are nearing release. Inmates must sign a "declaration of parenthood," or affidavit, verifying their parental status prior to receiving program services. The LTC campus staff responsible for coordinating the TANF Initiative Pre-Release program must also verify, with the assistance of the DPS&C, that program participants have served the majority of their sentence and are nearing release.

Last year, according to the memorandum of understanding (MOU), being within two years of release constituted "nearing release". This year, the definition of "nearing release" was expanded to include incarcerated fathers with the "greatest portion of their sentence served."

² The Technical Community College awarded the grant, Sowela Technical Community College, was previously a LTC.

³ There are fewer campuses involved in this year's Pre-Release program due to a statewide reorganization of the LTC system, which led to the consolidation of some of the programs providing services last year.

Exhibit 2
TANF Initiatives Funded Pre-Release Programs

LTC Campus	Correctional Facility	Location
1. LTC Alexandria Campus	J. Levy Dabadie Correctional Center	Pineville
2. LTC Avoyelles Campus	Avoyelles Correctional Center	Cottonport
3. LTC Florida Parishes Campus	Tangipahoa Parish Sheriff's Prison	Amite
4. LTC Folkes	Dixon Correctional Institute (DCI)	Jackson
	Louisiana State Penitentiary (LSP)	Angola
	Elayn Hunt Correctional Center (EHCC)	Plaquemine
5. LTC Natchitoches Campus	The Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Office, Corrections Division	Natchitoches
6. LTC Shelby M. Jackson Campus	Concordia Parish Correctional Facility	Ferriday
7. LTC Shreveport/ Bossier Campus	The David Wade Correctional Center – Forcht-Wade Service Center (FWCC)	Keithville
8. Sowela Technical Community	The C. Paul Phelps Correctional Center (CPPCC)	DeQuincy
9. LTC Sullivan campus	Washington Correctional Institute	Angie
10. LTC West Jefferson campus	Orleans Parish Prison	New Orleans

The intent of this policy change was to increase the length of time participants can be involved in the Pre-Release program, making it more likely that participants have enough time to complete program components, earn a technical certificate, and thereby improve their employment opportunities upon release.

Program Changes

Two of the most significant programmatic changes that took place in program year three, the organization of a statewide TANF implementation meeting and enhancement of the existing life skills curriculum, are discussed in the section below.

In program year three the LCTCS organized a state wide TANF implementation meeting bringing together the LTCs and correctional facilities involved in the Pre-Release program. During the meeting, the LCTCS discussed the year three program and distributed a TANF Implementation guide. The TANF Implementation guide includes information on performance targets, performance measures, TANF monitoring and reporting documentation and forms, fiscal invoicing/allowable expenditures, and program eligibility requirements, among other things. The guide also includes an agreement of understanding form, to be signed by the LTC campus and correctional facility participating in the TANF Initiatives program, that delineates their respective responsibilities.

Last year, BPA recommended that the LCTCS distribute program information to all correctional facilities and LTCs, utilizing a formal, non-internet based method to improve awareness of program requirements among both correctional facilities and LTC campuses. The statewide implementation meeting seems to have been an important step towards improving communication between the LCTCS and pre-release programs, and among LTCs and correctional facilities. Respondents interviewed this year acknowledged that the communications problems that existed last program year between LCTCS and the pre-release programs have for the most part been resolved. Respondents did indicate, though, that some communications problems still exist between individual LTCs and the correctional facilities.

The Statewide TANF Implementation meeting also provided an opportunity for the LCTCS to introduce this year's Fatherhood Curriculum, an enhancement to the existing life skills training component. The Fatherhood Curriculum "Quenching the Father First", developed by the National Center for Fathering, is a 13 week, small group, facilitator led training designed to help fathers address the challenges of fatherhood and develop the necessary tools to fulfill their roles as fathers. The director of training for the National Center for Fathering participated in the TANF implementation meeting. During the meeting he introduced the

Fatherhood Curriculum and discussed training opportunities for LTC Campus and correctional facility staff. The Fatherhood Curriculum and training provided to Pre-Release program staff is discussed in greater detail on page 22.

Program Implementation

This section describes program participants and the services provided to them through the Pre-Release program.

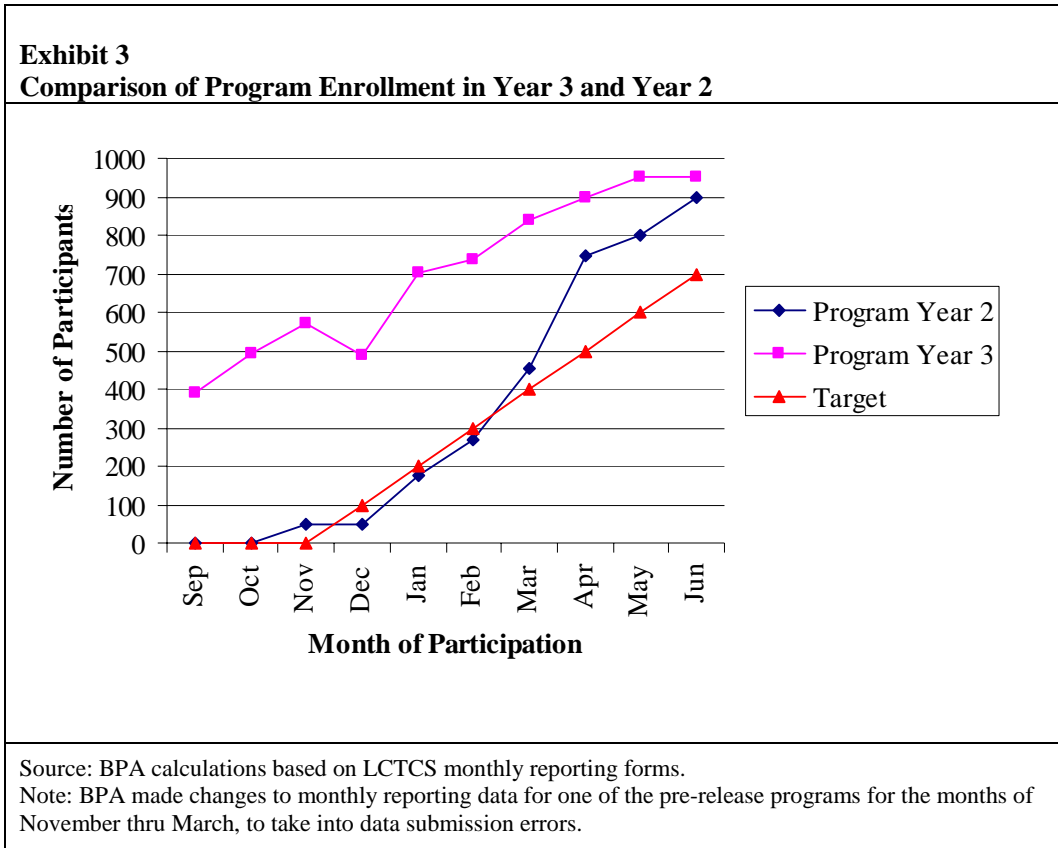
Enrollment

Program enrollment data, collected by LTC campuses and presented to the LCTCS in the form of monthly reporting forms, suggest that the Pre-Release program exceeded, as of June 2004, its annual participation target of 900 inmates.⁴ In June 2004, a total of 949 male inmates across the state received pre-release skills training (see Exhibit 3). Enrollment data also suggest that the Pre-Release program served, as of June 2004, more inmates than it served at the same time last year, despite having lost one third of its funding.

According to respondents, funding cuts have negatively impacted some programs. For instance, one program was forced to eliminate its welding program because it could not afford to pay for the instructor's salary. It was also forced to reduce one of its staff positions from full time to part-time, without a corresponding reduction in the amount of work the staff member was responsible for doing.

Next year, in the absence of TANF Initiatives funds, many correctional facilities will not have the resources to pay staff salaries to cover the costs of training. Additionally, instructional materials and supplies purchased with TANF Initiatives funds for the Pre-Release program remain the property of the LTC campuses, and will be removed from some of the correctional facilities, leaving the correctional facilities without necessary equipment to continue to provide training to inmates.

⁴ The Division of Administration (DOA) has set a variety of performance targets for the Pre-Release program. They include targets for the number of participants enrolled in specific components of the program, number of EEAPs filed, percentage of participants receiving an industry based certification, percentage earning LCTCS degree or certificate, percentage meeting workplace literacy goals, percentage attaining employment, percentage retaining employment and the percentage continuing their education.



Program Participant Characteristics

The demographic characteristics of program participants closely match those of adult inmates in the general prison population (see Exhibit 4). Program participation data, collected by individual pre-release programs from September 2002 thru June 2004, suggest that on average program participants are in their early 30's and are predominantly African American (68.9 percent). Most have one child (65.6) and are single (88.2 percent).

The data also suggest that Pre-Release program participants have considerably lower educational attainment than the general population of Louisiana. About half of Pre-Release program participants have not completed high school or an equivalency degree (GED), and only a small percentage (5.9) has completed post-secondary education. In comparison, a lower percentage (one quarter) of the adult population in Louisiana has not completed high school or an equivalency degree and a significantly higher percentage (42.4 percent) has

Berkeley Policy Associates
Evaluation of Pre-Release Skills Program

Exhibit 4
Characteristics of Pre-Release Program Participants
September 2002 thru June 2004

		<u>TANF Inmates</u>	<u>General Population Inmates</u>
Age:	Average Age	32.3 years	35.3 years
	18-29	46.6%	N.A.
	30-39	33.2	N.A.
	40-49	15.9	N.A.
	50 and over	4.3	N.A.
	<i>missing 1 observation</i>		
Gender:	Male	100.0%	93.2%
Marital Status:	Single	88.2%	N.A.
	Married	8.0	N.A.
	Divorced	3.6	N.A.
	Widowed	0.2	N.A.
Race/Ethnicity:	Black or African American	68.9%	71.3%
	White	27.4	28.4
	Other	3.8	0.3
	<i>missing 1 observation</i>		
Family Structure(a):	Average Number of Children	1.5	N.A.
	One Child	65.6	N.A.
	Two children	21.6	N.A.
	Three or more children	12.9	N.A.
	<i>missing 681 observations</i>		
Level of Education Completed	Less Than High School	50.3%	N.A.
	High School Diploma or GED	43.8	N.A.
	Post-Secondary Education	5.9	N.A.
	<i>missing 232 observations</i>		

(a) For those participants who reported having at least one child

Source of TANF Inmate Data: BPA calculations based on LCTCS web based administrative data.
Total number of Observations = 1079.

Source of General Inmate Data: Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections (2004)
Quarterly Statistical Performance Report-Q1. [Electronic Version] Retrieved Aug 2004, from:
<http://www.corrections.state.la.us/Statistics/QSPR.htm>. General Inmate data are for non-violent
offenders, who committed drug, property or other crimes.

N.A. signifies not available

completed post-secondary education.⁵ Educational attainment data for the general prison population in Louisiana is not available for comparison with the Pre-Release program prison population. Educational attainment data for the nations federal, state and local prison population suggest that inmates participating in the Pre-release program in Louisiana have lower educational attainment than the general US prison population. The Department of Justice, Bureau of Statistics estimates that a slightly lower percentage (41.3 percent) of the Nation's federal, state and local inmates have not completed high school or an equivalency degree and that a higher percentage (13.7 percent) have completed post-secondary education.

Employment Education Action Plan

In addition to providing instruction, Pre-Release program staff works with each individual participant to develop educational and training goals for the occupation they are interested in working in upon release. A key tool used to develop customized training for participants is the Education and Employment Action Plan (EEAP). Program staff completes the EEAP in consultation with each participant at the time of enrollment. The EEAP is designed to help staff and students identify individual personal and employment goals (e.g., earn a GED, earn a technical skills certificate, obtain employment in a specific area) and outline a plan for achieving these goals. The program requires that LTC campus TANF program coordinators monitor progress towards EEAP goals on a monthly basis.

According to monthly report forms, of the 949 male inmates enrolled in the program as of June 2004 EEAPs have been filed for almost every participant (93.2 percent). EEAPs are a key tool in developing individual training goals and monitoring progress towards these goals, so this is a significant improvement from last year, when EEAPs had been filed for about half (52 percent) of program participants. By filing an EEAP for most participants, the Pre-Release program has exceeded its target of filing EEAPs for 60 percent of inmates.

Program participants report in their EEAPs that earning a job related certificate (58.7), obtaining a job (15.8), and earning a GED (15.2) are their primary goals of participating in the program. Even among individuals who had not obtained a secondary high school diploma or GED, about half (51 percent) reported earning a job related certificate as their primary goal and only about one quarter (27.6 percent) cited earning a GED as their primary goal.

⁵ Estimates are for the adult population aged 25 years and over. Figures taken from the U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3, Louisiana. [Electronic Version] Retrieved Aug 2004, from: http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/OTTable?_bm=n&_lang=en&qr_name=DEC_2000_SF3_U_DP2&ds_name=DEC_2000_SF3_U&geo_id=04000US22

Exhibit 5
Use of EEAPs in Pre-Release Programs
Comparison Program Year 3 and Year 2

	<u>June-04</u>	<u>June-03</u>
Number of EEAPs on file	949	466
Percentage of Participants with an EEAP	93.2%	52.0%

Source: BPA calculations based on LCTCS Monthly Reporting Forms

Exhibit 6
EEAP Goals for Pre-Release Participants
September 2002 thru June 2004

<u>Primary Goal</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Earn a job-related certificate	58.7
Obtain a job	15.8
Earn a secondary school diploma or GED certificate	15.2
Improve basic literacy-numeracy skills	6.9
Earn a four year degree	2.3
Earn a two year degree	0.8
Retain or improve status on current job	0.2
Improve English language skills	0

Source: BPA calculations based on LCTCS web based administrative data.
Total number of observations = 828

Service Delivery

Although designs of individual programs vary by campus/correctional facility (including the types of technical training offered, total hours of training, and scheduling of training, among other things), all service providers are required to provide training in the following areas:

- Workplace literacy;
- Technical skills;
- Life skills;
- Work readiness; and
- Basic skills instruction.

Data collected by the pre-release programs for this study suggest that the overwhelming majority program of participants who exited the program between September 2002 and May 2004 received workplace literacy, work readiness, life and technical skills training. Over half received basic skills training. On average participants received training during a period of five and half months (see Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7		
Participation and Achievement in Program Training Components among Program Exitters^(a)		
September 2002 thru June 2004		
Average number of months enrolled in program	5.4	
	<u>Percentage of</u> <u>Participants</u>	<u>Average training</u> <u>hours</u>
Exitters Receiving Training in...		
Workplace Literacy	98.1	43.3
Basic Skills	61.9	86.4
Job Skills	82.4	66.1
Life Skills	86.8	31.8
Technical Skills	86.7	77.1
Source: BPA calculations based on data submitted by pre-release programs for this study (a) "Exitters" denotes participants that have exited the program due to completion of training or being released from the correctional facility Total Number of Observations =273		

A detailed discussion of the services received by participants in each of the major training areas of the program is provided below.

Workplace Literacy

Workplace literacy training is offered at all program sites through the WorkKeys system, an occupational skills profiling, assessment, and training tool developed by ACT.⁶ The workplace literacy training is designed to help program participants build their workplace skills. It is also designed to provide a means for inmates to document their workplace literacy skills attainment to employers.

⁶ ACT is a non-profit organization that develops educational and workforce development related assessments. For more information please go to the following website: <http://www.act.org/>

Almost every program participant has received some workplace literacy training. As of June 2004, 947 program participants had enrolled in workplace literacy training, of which 407 (43 percent) “exited” workplace training. A workplace literacy “exiter” is someone who has finished participating in WorkKeys for any of the following reasons: completed the scheduled course time period (usually a minimum of 45 hours), achieved workplace literacy goals, or exited the TANF program for some other reason. On average, participants exiting workplace literacy were enrolled in training for 5.1 months and received 63.7 hours of training.

Exhibit 8
Participation in Workplace Literacy Component
Program Year Three (August 2003 to May 2004)

Number of TANF Initiative participants in Work Keys	947
Number of Workplace Literacy exiters (a)	407
Percentage of Workplace Literacy participants that have exited	43.0%
Average amount of hours exiters spent in Workplace Literacy	63.7
Average duration of enrollment in Workplace Literacy (in months)	5.1

Source: BPA calculations of WorkKeys data, June 2004

(a) "Exiters" denotes WorkKeys participants that have exited the Workplace Literacy component due to meeting program requirements of participating in WorkKeys for at least 45 hours, meeting Workplace Literacy goals, exiting the TANF Initiative program, or another reason. Exiters may still be enrolled in the TANF Initiative program.

Upon enrolling in workplace literacy training, all students undergo a work readiness screening to determine whether or not they have the skills necessary to proceed with the WorkKeys assessments. Those that are determined “ready” proceed to take the assessments. Those that are determined “not ready” undergo basic skills upgrade training through WorkKeys-related software (Key Train, Plato, etc) and do not take the assessment until they achieve a “ready” score.

Exhibit 9
Participation and Achievement for Workplace Literacy Exiters^(a)
Program Year Three (August 2003 to May 2004)

	<u>Pre-Release Program Participants</u>
Number of Workplace Literacy exiters	407
Percent of exiters scoring "Ready" on readiness screening	79.4%
Percent of exiters that improved from "Not Ready" to "Ready" on readiness screening	67.8%
Percentage of exiters taking core assessments:	
No assessments	47.9%
One assessment	0.5%
Two assessments	0.5%
Three assessments	51.1%
Percentage of exiters taking at least one additional assessment	54.3%
Percent of exiters taking Applied Math that score 3 or higher	81.1%
Percent of exiters taking Reading for Information that score 3 or higher	85.6%
Percent of exiters taking Locating Information that score 3 or higher	73.2%
Percentage of exiters meeting all goals (b)	19.7%
Percentage of exiters earning a Work Ready Certificate	31.9%
<i>Sample size (c)</i>	<i>407</i>

Source: BPA calculations of WorkKeys data, June 2004

(a) "Exiters" denotes WorkKeys participants that have exited the Workplace Literacy component due to meeting program requirements of participating in WorkKeys for at least 45 hours, meeting Workplace Literacy goals, exiting the TANF Initiative program, or another reason. Exiters may still be enrolled in the TANF Initiative program.

(b) When students enroll in Workplace Literacy, individual achievement goals or scores to attain in each relevant module are set based on the occupational profile of students' intended career.

(c) Sample size for completers moving from Not Ready to Ready is smaller, due to the limitation of initially scoring Not Ready. Sample size for these percentages is 59 students.

Among exiters of workplace literacy training, most (79.4 percent) were “ready” to take the WorkKeys assessments. Of those who were determined “not ready” to take the WorkKeys, the majority (67.8 percent) were able to improve their basic skills to become eligible to undergo the WorkKeys assessments.

There are a total of nine work skills assessments in the WorkKeys system. Three are core assessments (Applied Mathematics, Locating Information and Reading for Information) and six are additional assessments (Applied Technology, Business Writing, Listening, Observation, Teamwork, and Writing). All Pre-Release program participants are required to take the three core workplace literacy assessments, and time permitting, some programs enable students to take additional assessments pertaining to their target occupational goals. The most common additional assessments undertaken were Observation, Teamwork, and Listening.

About half of the participants exiting the WorkKeys training component took the three core assessments and over half (54.3) took at least one additional assessment. Last year, less than 40 percent of participants took all three assessments and very few took any additional assessments.

After participants’ skill levels are assessed, those who do not meet the required minimum employability levels for their chosen occupational fields undergo workplace literacy skills upgrade training.⁷ Depending on the occupation goal, a score of three or higher in each assessment is required to meet minimum employability levels. Scores on the assessment range from a low of one to a high of seven. Throughout the training, participants retake the WorkKeys assessments to gauge skill level attainment. Participants continue to receive skills upgrade training until they meet the minimum employability levels in their target occupational skills areas.

Among those exiting, approximately twenty percent met the workplace literacy goals set for them. This is short of the program’s forty percent target, but is an improvement from last year, when only ten percent of participants met their workplace literacy goals. Most program participants exiting workplace literacy scored at or above a level three in the individual core WorkKeys assessments, but it appears that these scores were not sufficient to meet the scores required for their target occupations.

⁷ The minimum employability levels for various occupations are developed through the WorkKeys National Occupational Profile system. Minimum employability levels are measured through the workplace literacy area assessments.

Participants who score a three or above on the three core tests are eligible for the Work Ready Certificate. The Work Ready Certificate is a portable credential that documents workplace skills attainment. Among those exiting, 130 individuals (31.9 percent) earned a Work Ready Certificate. The certificate has 3 levels of skills attainment: gold, silver and bronze.⁸ Over half of the program participants who obtained a Work Ready Certificate, achieved at least a silver level.

Exhibit 10
Percentages of Workplace Literacy Exiters Earning Work Ready Certificates^(a)
Program Year Three (August 2003 to May 2004)

	Tuition Students
Percentage of Exiters earning a Work Ready Certificate	31.9%
Percentage of Exiters achieving Bronze Level	13.3%
Percentage of Exiters achieving Silver Level	14.0%
Percentage of Exiters achieving Gold Level	4.7%
<i>Sample Size</i>	<i>130</i>

Source: BPA calculations based on WorkKeys data, June 2004

(a) "Exiters" denotes WorkKeys participants that have exited the Workplace Literacy component due to meeting program requirements of participating in WorkKeys for at least 45 hours, meeting Workplace Literacy goals, exiting the TANF Initiative program, or another reason. Exiters may still be enrolled in the TANF Initiative program.

Note: Bronze signifies earning a score of 3 or higher on the 3 core WorkKeys assessments; Silver denotes scoring 4 or higher on the assessments; and Gold signifies participants have earned scores of 5 or higher on the 3 assessments. Some schools entered a date rather than a level earned when reporting date about Work Ready Certificate achievement, making it impossible to determine whether students had achieved Bronze, Silver, or Gold Certificates. These students are not included in the by-level reporting but are in overall Work Readiness Certificates awarded.

Interview respondents expressed that the workplace literacy is beneficial to inmates. They reported that inmates have more time than the average LTC student to work on their goals, and as a result are taking additional employability assessments and are improving their scores. Respondents noted that in addition to the workplace literacy skills attainment, the training has also allowed inmates, some who had never used a computer before, to become computer literate.

⁸ A Gold Certificate is awarded to those individuals who score at or above a level 5 in each of the core areas. A Silver Certificate is awarded to individuals who score at or above a level 4 in each of the core areas. And a Bronze Certificate is awarded to those individuals who score at or above a level 3 in each of the core areas.

One disadvantage that inmates face when taking workplace literacy courses, however, is that they undergo paper based, as opposed to Internet/computer based testing (inmates are not allowed to access to the Internet for security reasons). Several respondents indicated that paper based testing poses disadvantages for inmates. One disadvantage is that some inmates, who are used to practicing WorkKeys on computer, do not perform as well when switching to paper based tests. Another disadvantage of paper testing is that it takes more time to receive test results than computer based testing (for which results are available in real time).⁹

During interviews, BPA learned that one program has devised a way for inmates to take the WorkKeys assessments on the computer. The workplace literacy instructor downloads the assessments from the Internet and then uploads them on the computers that inmates use. Other programs may want to consider the option of uploading WorkKeys assessments so that inmates can take the assessments on the computer and attain results on a quicker basis.

Technical Skills

The technical skills training is designed to prepare participants for entry-level employment in a number of technical fields, including: air conditioning and refrigeration, auto mechanics, carpentry, computer support, horticulture, masonry and welding. The number and types of technical skills training courses offered varies by program. Some programs offer inmates a choice of one or two technical skills areas, whereas others offer up to seven skills areas (see Exhibit 11).

Data collected by the pre-release programs for this study suggest that individuals exiting the program between September 2002 and May 2004 most commonly received training as Computer Support Specialists (See Exhibit 12). Other common areas of training include Botany/Horticulture, Electrician Helper and Auto mechanics. On average inmates exiting the program received over 100 hours of technical skills training.

⁹ Campuses using paper tests have to send tests to ACT by mail to obtain test results.

Exhibit 11
Technical Training Areas offered to Pre-Release Program Participants
Program Year 3

<u>Training Area</u>	<u>LTC Campuses Offering Technical Training</u>
Air-conditioning, & Refrigeration	Folkes and Natchitoches
Auto mechanics <i>(includes Automotive Body and Collision Repair)</i>	Avoyelles and Folkes
Botany/Horticulture	Avoyelles, Folkes and Shreveport Bossier
Building Engineering or Technology Specialist	Florida Parishes, and Folkes
Carpentry	Natchitoches, Folkes and Sullivan
Computer Support Specialist <i>(includes Office Systems Technology and Computer Technology)</i>	Avoyelles, Shelby M. Jackson, Shreveport Bossier, Sowela and Sullivan
Communication Electronics	Folkes
Culinary Arts and Occupations	Avoyelles and Folkes
Diesel powered equipment technology	Avoyelles
Electrician Helper	Alexandria
Graphic Arts	Folkes
Masonry	Avoyelles and West Jefferson
Receptionist and Information Clerk	Alexandria and Folkes
Welding	Folkes

Exhibit 12
Participation in Technical Training among Program Exiters^(a)
September 2002 thru June 2004

	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Average Number of Training Hours</u>
Computer Support Specialist	45.3	94.5
Botany/Horticulture	8.1	211.5
Electrician Helper	7.8	153.6
Auto mechanics: Automotive Body Repair	6.3	N.A.
Building Specialist (Carpentry, Electricity, Plumbing)	5.9	87.4
Receptionist and Information Clerk	5.0	67.5
Carpentry	4.7	104.5
Welding	4.1	N.A.
Network Systems and Data Communication Analyst	3.4	121.5
Heating, Air-conditioning, & Refrigeration	2.2	60.0
Masonry	2.2	48.5
Marketing Manager	1.9	45.0
Culinary	1.3	N.A.
None specified	0.9	0.0
Graphic Arts	0.9	N.A.
Total	100	106.8

Source: BPA calculations based on data submitted by pre-release programs for this study

(a) "Exiters" denotes participants that have exited the program due to completion of training or being released from the correctional facility

Total Number of Observations =273

N.A. Signifies Not Available

Participants who complete a designated number of training hours are eligible to receive LTC certification, which can include a Technical Competency Area (TCA) certificate, Certificate of Technical Studies (CTS), or a Technical Diploma (TD).¹⁰ The types of certificates offered to participants vary by campus. Most of the LTC campuses provide those who complete technical skills training courses with a TCA certificate. For example, program participants at the LTC Avoyelles/Avoyelles Correctional Center program who complete 600 hours in the Masonry course receive a TCA certificate in Masonry (see Appendix). Certificates of Technical Studies are available at LTC Avoyelles and LTC Folkes in various technical fields, including collision repair, culinary arts, graphic arts, and horticulture instruction. The LTC Avoyelles and LTC Folkes campus programs are the only ones providing participants with the possibility of earning a Technical Diploma. TDs are available in eight technical fields, including automotive technician, communications electronics, and carpentry. Technical Diplomas require a substantial number of hours of technical training, and are more than likely unattainable by Pre-Release program participants, since the majority are nearing release and do not have sufficient time to complete required training hours.

In addition to providing LTC certificates, some of the programs prepare inmates for industry based certification examinations. For instance, students enrolled at the Natchitoches Campus who complete the Air Conditioning and Refrigeration course receive training to prepare them for Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Certification. Those who complete the LTC Folkes Welding and Auto mechanics trainings, and the Computer Support Specialist training at LTC Sowela and LTC Sullivan also receive preparation for industry-based certifications. None of these programs, however, allow opportunities for inmates to take certifications tests while enrolled in the Pre-Release program prior to their release.

Students completing Computer Support Specialist training at the LTC Shelby M. Jackson/Concordia Parish Facility are the only ones who are able to receive industry-based certification prior to their release. As of June 2004, a total of 10 inmates at Shelby M. Jackson/Concordia Parish Facility received their Microsoft Office User Specialist (MOUS) Master Certification.¹¹ Additionally one inmate obtained an A+ Certification in computer

¹⁰ A TCA certificate is an applied course or series of courses that provides students with a specific technical competency. A Certificate of Technical Studies (CTS) is an applied technical program that is formed by combining multiple TCAs to provide a student with a broad technical competency. A Technical Diploma (TD) is an applied technical program that is formed by combining multiple CTSs and generally provides students with the skills and technical competencies to be eligible to take a state-licensing exam.

¹¹ To obtain a MOUS Master Certificate individuals must be certified by Microsoft in the Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access and Outlook programs. For more information see <http://www.microsoft.com/learning/mcp/officespecialist/requirements.asp>

hardware and a Microsoft Certified Professional (MCP) Certification.¹² The program also set an internal goal of having 100 percent of program participants certified in at least one Microsoft program, which it was able to reach last year and expects to reach this year, as well.

Recommendation #1:

Efforts should be made, where possible, to enable inmates who complete technical training to take industry based certification tests prior to release. Industry based certificates will provide inmates with the necessary credentials to document their skills attainment and facilitate their job search upon release. Furthermore, inmates can benefit from having the costs of certifications examinations paid for by the Pre-Release program.

Technical Training Areas and Occupational Demand

Programs are requested, during the proposal process, to justify the technical training areas they have chosen for their programs. Most programs justify technical training areas on the basis that the training will lead to employment in a demand occupation, or in the case that the training area is not part of a demand occupation, that there is employer demand in the area.

Programs rely on occupation demand estimates published by the Louisiana Department of Labor to determine whether or not training areas are demand occupations.¹³ Although the majority of the technical training areas offered by individual pre-release programs are in demand occupations, there are some technical training areas offered that are not demand occupations.¹⁴

¹² The Computer Technology Industry Association (CompTIA) describes the A+ certification as "...an international industry credential that validates the knowledge of computer service technicians with the equivalent of 500 hours of hands-on experience. Major hardware and software vendors, distributors and resellers accept CompTIA A+ as the standard in foundation-level, vendor-neutral certification for service technicians." For more information see <http://www.comptia.org/certification/a/default.aspx>.

¹³ The Occupational Forecast Conference determines demand occupations by analyzing long-term job growth and demand. The top demand occupations are those that have the highest expected annual demand, taking into account growth and replacement demand. The calculations for demand occupations are based on industry and occupational projections, along with data on national replacement rates, and other sources of information.

¹⁴ Three quarters of the technical training areas offered at by Pre-Release program are *regional tier 1* or *top demand* occupations (that is they are in the top half of the demand occupations in that region). In one program, LTC Natchitoches, one of the technical training areas is a *tier 2* demand occupation (on the bottom half of the list of top demand occupations).

Eight technical training courses offered across the pre-release programs are not considered *regional* demand occupations, namely: Masonry (LTC Avoyelles), Horticulture (LTC Avoyelles, LTC Folkes and LTC Shreveport-Bossier) and Computer Support Specialist (LTC Shelby M. Jackson and LTC Sowela). Some of these occupations, particularly Computer Specialist are considered demand occupations across the state, but not in the regions where the programs are located. For instance, the Department of Labor estimates that there will be 270 annual job openings statewide for Computer Support Specialists from 2000 thru 2010, but only 10 annual openings in the Alexandria Region (Avoyelles, Catahoula, Concordia, Grant, LaSalle, Rapides, Vernon and Winn parishes).¹⁵

As noted in one program proposal, however, the Computer Support Specialist is one of the fastest growing occupations statewide (it has an expected growth rate of 78.6 percent) and regionally (it has an expected growth rate of 80.7 percent in the Alexandria region and 105.7 percent in the Lake Charles region). Additionally it is estimated that the average hourly wage for Computer Support Specialists ranges from \$18.82 (statewide) to \$15.24.¹⁶ Therefore, it appears that pre-release programs consider other factors, in addition to whether or not training falls in “demand occupations”, when selecting technical training areas. One interview respondent suggested that additional factors, such as the space available at the correctional facility and the amount of time inmates have available in their schedules, also influence technical training decisions. The respondent also cited that the technical colleges’ previous success with obtaining employment for program completers in a particular training area also enter into the decision making.

Life Skills

The life skills component is designed to assist program participants in their transition from prison life. Individual curricula vary by program, but most cover parenting skills; anger management; money and time management; and relationship-forming and social skills. Life skills classes are usually conducted in the form of small group discussion. One life skill instructor indicated that he/she adapts the curriculum to meet the needs of the group of men he/she is facilitating. For example, he/she may spend more time on money management issues such as balancing a checkbook or obtaining a loan with one group, and more time on another section of the curriculum with another group.

¹⁵ Louisiana Department of Labor. Table of Occupational Projections for all Occupations 2000-2010. For more information go to http://www.laworks.net/forms/lmi/Occupations_AllProj.xls#r1ma6

¹⁶ Louisiana Department of Labor. Table of Top Growth Occupations. For more information go to http://www.laworks.net/forms/lmi/Occupations_TopGrowth.xls#Statewide

In program year three, a specialized fatherhood component was added to the life skills curriculum. The National Centering for Fathering, whose goal is to improve the lives of children through effective fathering, developed the Fatherhood Curriculum.¹⁷ The curriculum, which consists of a facilitator-led 13 week small group session, covers the following areas: children's needs, manhood, stress, family history, women, partnerships, and breakthrough fathering skills. The goal of the training is to provide fathers with necessary skills to: understand and address the challenges of fathering; explore the impact and reconciliation process in a father's family history; identify the primary needs of children; address children's needs and re-integrate themselves into their families.

The curriculum was introduced to campuses and correctional facilities during the TANF statewide implementation meeting. The campuses/correctional facilities were given the choice of training their staff in the curriculum or hiring a subcontractor to facilitate the course. The majority of campuses chose to train their staff. Campuses choosing not to train their own staff usually did so because they did not have a male staff person available to facilitate the training (the National Center for Fathering recommends that the facilitator of the program be a male).

Interview respondents were enthusiastic about and spoke positively of the Fathering Curriculum. They acknowledged that the Fatherhood Curriculum has been a big asset to the program and that the material covered is on target with the fathering training needs of inmates. They felt the training has made participants more aware of what they need to do and the challenges they will face when they need to juggle work and parenting. They also believe the training will assist them in integrating with their families upon release.

On average, program participants exiting the program between September 2002 and June 2004 who were enrolled in life skills (86.8 percent) received 31.8 hours of life skills training. Hours of training provided vary by individual program, with one program providing inmates an average of 120 hours of life skills training.

Workplace Readiness and Job Skills Instruction

The workplace readiness component is designed to provide program participants with basic job skills training to prepare them for employment upon release. Curricula vary by program, but most topics covered include: the employment application and interview process (writing a resume, completing a job application, and interview techniques), workplace behavior (work

¹⁷ "The Center was founded in 1990 by Dr. Ken Canfield to conduct research on fathers and fathering, and to develop practical resources to prepare dads for nearly every fathering situation." For more information see <http://www.fathers.com/about/>

maturity, attendance and punctuality, and individual responsibility), and time management skills. The curriculum currently used by many of the pre-release programs is based on the curriculum of the LTC job seeking skills course offered at LTC campuses.

All program participants are required to participate in workplace readiness training. Upon the completion of training inmates usually have prepared resumes, practiced writing cover letters, and conducted mock-interviews-all with the goal of assisting them with their job search upon release. The number of training hours also varies by campus, with some campuses, such as LTC Shreveport Bossier, offering 40 hours of training and others, such as LTC Avoyelles, offering 70 hours.

Program participants exiting the program between September 2002 and June 2004 who were enrolled in job skills (82.4 percent) received an average of 66.1 hours of job skills training (nearly double the amount of hours of life skills training received). One interview respondent felt it was critical for correctional facilities to continue to teach inmates job skills, especially given the overwhelming challenges that inmates will face in seeking employment upon release.

Basic Skills

Some pre-release programs use adult basic skills assessments, such as the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) or the ASSET, to measure program participants' academic and basic skills levels prior to enrolling in training programs.¹⁸ The TABE measures reading, mathematics, language, and spelling skills levels. The ASSET measures reading, writing, and mathematics skills. The assessment scores are used to identify individuals who may benefit from Adult Basic Education (ABE) and/or General Educational Development (GED) preparation.

Not all program participants are required to enroll in basic skills. In some programs only those participants who have low basic skills are required to enroll in ABE or GED preparation. For instance, in the LTC Avoyelles/Avoyelles Correctional Center program, if the inmate does not have the necessary skills levels (as measured by the TABE) to participate in the Masonry training then they are required to receive ABE to build their skills levels. There are three programs, however, that require all inmates who have not completed high school or obtained a GED to participate in basic skills training. In these programs, if an inmate has low basic skills levels, they enroll them in ABE. Otherwise, if their TABE scores indicate that they are at or near the 11th or 12th grade high school levels they are enrolled in GED preparation.

¹⁸ ASSET is a testing and advising program for postsecondary placement developed by ACT.

Studies have shown that inmate educational programs, including those that have a GED and vocational component, can have positive outcomes on the employment and earnings prospects of inmates.¹⁹ The higher the educational achievement of inmates at release, the more likely they are to be employed and the higher their average yearly wage. Hence, the Pre-Release program should consider making GED preparation a requirement for those who have not completed high school; particularly since almost half of program participants have not completed high school or obtained a GED. Over half of program participants exiting the program between September 2002 and June 2004 received an average of 86.41 hours of ABE or GED preparation training.

Provision of Job Placement, Educational and Social Services Referrals Prior to Release

Research indicates that among ex-offenders, availability of services prior to release, including links to employment opportunities, is a critical component of successful transitions from incarceration.²⁰ Presently, the Pre-Release program does not have systematic procedures for providing program participants with referrals to job placement, educational, or social services while they are enrolled in the program/prior to their release.

At some locations, LTC instructors make referrals to employment opportunities at particular companies they know have openings. However, most programs do not help inmates with the job placement process. Research suggests that inmates who obtain employment prior to release recidivate at a lower rate (27.6 percent) than those who did not secure employment (53.9).²¹ Hence, programs, where possible, should aim to provide inmates with links to employment opportunities, along with information on employers who are willing to hire ex-offenders with technical skills, prior to release, to assist them in obtaining employment upon release.

Ex-offenders face multiple barriers to employment, including low-skills, low literacy, limited work history, and reluctance of employers to hire individuals with criminal records.²² Since

¹⁹ Martinez and Eisenberg. (2000) *Impact of Educational Achievement of Inmates in the Windham School District on Post-Release Employment*. Criminal Justice Policy Council. [Electronic Version] Retrieved Aug 2004, from: <http://www.cjpc.state.tx.us/reports/alphalist/wsdemploy10.pdf>

²⁰ Lawrence, S., D.P. Mears, G. Dubin, and J. Travis. (May 2002). *The Practice and Promise of Prison Programming*. Urban Institute, Washington, D.C. [Electronic Version] Retrieved Aug 2004, from: http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/410493_PrisonProgramming.pdf

²¹ Harer, M. (1994). *Recidivism Among Federal Prisoners Released in 1987*. Federal Bureau of Prisons, Office of Research and Evaluation. [Electronic Version] Retrieved Aug 2004, from: <http://www.bop.gov/orepg/oreprrecid87.pdf> (Aug. 2004)

²² Heldrich, J. & Bloustein, J. (2003). *Employment Opportunity for Ex-Offenders in New Jersey* [Electronic Version]. New Jersey Institute for Social Justice. [Electronic Version] Retrieved Aug 2004, from: http://www.njisj.org/reports/heldrich_report.html

inmates will be in need of job placement and education/training programs to help them in their transition upon release, more efforts should be developed to provide formal linkages to these programs and provide program participants with information about available services prior to their release.

Recommendation #2:

We recommend that LCTCS develop a system to provide inmates with links to job placement and post-release training services prior to release. LCTCS, in collaboration with DPS&C, should implement a program component that strengthens links between the training and post-training opportunities that former inmates may be able to access upon release. It is particularly important that participants are given information on employment opportunities related to recently acquired technical skills and have access to job placement services prior to their release from prison.

Some LTC instructors and correctional facility staff encourage participants to enroll in adult basic education and technical training programs after release, and provide them with information on such programs, but not all programs provide such encouragement or information. Campus programs are expected to provide Pre-Release program participants with transcripts and credit hours so that they can continue their education at any LTC campus across the state upon release. One respondent expressed concern, though, that transcript documentation may not be taking place at one program. LCTCS should ensure that all LTC campuses are providing transcripts to inmates and that records are entered into administrative databases so that ex-offenders who decide to continue their education can have the credits obtained during their participation in the Pre-Release program count towards their degree.

Recommendation #3:

We recommend that LCTCS provide information and support to those inmates who wish to continue to pursue educational goals or technical skills certifications upon release, and ensure that inmates receive official transcripts upon completion of training.

Program Outcomes

One of the main objectives of this year's evaluation is to track the employment and recidivism outcomes of Pre-Release program participants. During the first two years of program implementation only a small number of inmates who completed training were released from prison. As time has elapsed, more inmates have been released from prison, allowing us to examine the impact of training on the employment and recidivism outcomes of program participants.

It will be some time though, before long-term outcomes can be collected and the full impact of this program assessed, as the overwhelming majority of program participants are still within several months of their release dates. Hence, the employment and recidivism outcomes presented in this section should be examined with some caution, since only short term, preliminary program impacts for a small number of participants are available. Additionally, since outcomes data is currently available for only a small number of participants, the findings presented in this report cannot be generalized to the rest of the inmate population participating in this program.

Employment Rate of Program Participants

This section presents information on the employment outcomes of program exiters, including their employment rate, earnings, and retention, among other things.

During the first year and a half of program implementation (September 2002 thru December 2003) 96 program participants were released from prison. Among those released, 33 individuals (25.0 percent) obtained employment in the quarter of their release.

Focusing on the 10 individuals for whom employment data is available for at least three quarters after release, two individuals obtained employment in the quarter in which they were released. As time passed, more individuals became employed. For instance, two quarters after release, six of the ten individuals had obtained employment.

Exhibit 13
Post-Release Employment Rate and Earnings
Fourth Quarter 2003

	Percent Employed (%)	Average Quarterly Earnings of the Employed (\$)
Quarter of Exit from the Program	25.0	2,617
<i>Total Number of Observations</i>	96	24

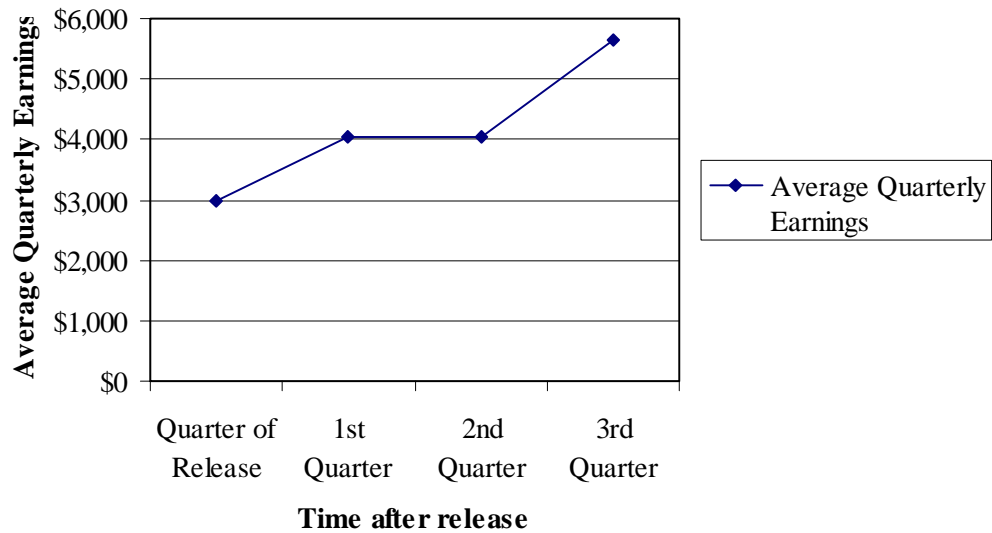
Source: Year 3 program participant records obtained from Pre-Release programs and Louisiana Department of Labor Unemployment Insurance wage records through the fourth quarter 2003.
Note: Individuals are counted as employed if their total quarterly earnings are \$100 or higher.

Earnings Growth

Individuals who obtained employment upon release had average earnings of \$2,617 for the quarter of release. Over time, the individuals who retained their employment experienced an increase in their earnings.

Again, focusing on those 10 individuals from whom employment data is available for three quarters after release, quarterly earnings among those employed grew from \$2,968 in the first quarter after release to \$5,644 in the third quarter after release (see exhibit 14).

Exhibit 14
Post-Release Average Quarterly Earnings of the Employed



Source: Year 3 program participant records obtained from Pre-Release programs and Louisiana Department of Labor Unemployment Insurance wage records through the fourth quarter 2003.
Note: The sample (N=10) is limited to those for whom data is available for at least three quarters.

Earnings by Industry of Employment

Average quarterly earnings for those employed in the quarter after release varied by industry of employment. Individuals employed with Business Temporary Agencies had the lowest average quarterly earnings (\$911) and those employed in the Wholesale Trade sector had the highest average quarterly earnings (\$6,628)

Exhibit 15
Average Quarterly Earnings by Sector of Employment

	<u>Mean</u>
Wholesale Trade	\$6,628
Services: Health	5,177
Manufacturing	4,005
Construction	2,802
Retail: Other	2,742
Retail: Eating & Drinking Places	1,419
Public Administration	1,417
Transportation, Communication, Utilities	1,259
Services: Business-Temp Agencies	911

Source: BPA Calculations based on Louisiana Department of Labor UI Data

Employment Retention

Focusing on those 10 individuals from whom employment data is available for three quarters after release, estimates suggest that three individuals were continuously employed.

Training and Industry of Employment

The most common industries of employment for inmates who obtained employment in the quarter after release were Manufacturing, Retail, and Construction.

Among those individuals employed upon release, it appears that most did not obtain employment in industries related to their training areas. For example, individuals who received training in Computer Support were employed in a range of industries not directly related to computing including Manufacturing, Construction, Wholesale trade, and Retail. That said, the industry classifications for program participants encompass a wide variety of occupations and it is difficult to match training areas with the occupations of program participants. Therefore, even though it is stated above that Computer Support Specialists

working in the Construction or Manufacturing sectors appear to have not obtained employment in the area in which they received training, there may be a chance that these individuals are providing Computer Support Services within these industries.

Recidivism Outcomes

In this section the recidivism rate of program participants is examined and compared to the recidivism rate of the general inmate population. The recidivism outcomes estimates presented in this section are preliminary, as there are only a limited number of participants who have been released and since recidivism statistics are not typically calculated for inmates until at least 3 years following release.

Exhibit 16
Recidivism in Adult Corrections
June-04

	Year of Release		
	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>
Recidivism Rate of...			
Total Population	3.3%	18.9%	33.5%
State Facilities	1.0	15.0	31.8
Local Facilities	3.5	20.0	35.2
Education	0.9	12.8	24.3
TANF/Pre-Release	0.0	10.8	N.A.

Source of recidivism data for Total, State, Local Facilities and Education populations: Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections (DPS&C). Recidivism in Adult Corrections (Percent Return).

June 30, 2004. [Electronic Version] Retrieved Aug 2004.

http://www.corrections.state.la.us/Statistics/PDF_BB/02-Office%20of%20Adult%20Services/percent%20return.pdf

Recidivism is defined by the DPS&C as a "return to custody following conviction for a new felony or technical revocation of supervision after having been released from incarceration".

TANF/Pre-Release recidivism data calculated by BPA using DPS&C CAJUN data.

Recidivism amongst Pre-Release program participants is estimated using data from the DPS&C's Corrections and Justice Unified Network System (CAJUN) database. In this study recidivism is defined as return to custody in a state correctional facility following release.

Out of a total of 346 inmates who exited the Pre-Release program on or before June 04, slightly over half (194 or 56.1 percent) were released from prison. Among this group of individuals released from prison (whose release time ranges from a couple of months to a little over a year), preliminary estimates show that 10 individuals (5.2 percent) were re-incarcerated. The number of days between Pre-Release program exit and re-incarceration among these individuals ranged from a minimum of 80 days to a maximum of 380 days.

Exhibit 17	
Recidivism among Pre-Release Participants	
June-04	
<u>Return to prison following Pre-Release program exit</u>	<u>Number of Participants</u>
0-3 months	1
3-6 months	3
6-12 months	4
12 months or more	2
Never returned	184
Source: BPA Calculations based Pre-Release program and DPS&C CAJUN records.	

One of the goals of this study is to compare the recidivism rates of inmates receiving training under the Pre-Release program to the recidivism rate of the rest of the inmate population. Preliminary estimates suggest that individuals participating in the Pre-Release program are returning to prison at a lower rate than inmates in the general prison population. For instance, the recidivism rate of Pre-Release program participants (10.8 percent) released in 2003 is eight percentage points lower than the recidivism rate of the total prison population (18.9 percent). Our estimates also show that the recidivism rate of Pre-Release program participants is lower (2 percent) than that of inmates who have access to educational programs while incarcerated. These results suggest that the additional training provided to Pre-Release program participants (such as workplace literacy, parenting, job skills and life skills) may be helping inmates cope with challenges they face in transitioning to society.

Workplace Literacy Outcomes

Analysis of workplace literacy records suggests that program participants experienced gains in their workplace literacy skills. For instance, over one quarter of those individuals who had initially scored below a level three on their applied math core assessments were able to improve their scores to above a level three.

Exhibit 18
Improvements in Scores on WorkKeys Assessments for Program Exiters^(a)
Program Year Three (August 2003 to May 2004)

	Pre-Release Participants	
	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>
Percent with baseline scores on core assessments less than 3	16.5	67
Percentage whose baseline test score was less than 3		
Applied Math	9.8	40
Reading for Information	7.4	30
Locating Information	13.8	56
Percentage of these participants who improved scores from below Level 3		
Applied Math	27.5	11
Reading for Information	13.3	4
Locating Information	13.3	7

Source: BPA calculations based on WorkKeys data, June 2004

(a) "Exiters" denotes WorkKeys participants that have exited the Workplace Literacy component due to meeting program requirements of participating in WorkKeys for at least 45 hours, meeting Workplace Literacy goals, exiting the TANF Initiative program, or another reason.

Note: Baseline score denotes the first time students took an assessment. The degree to which this represents an actual baseline measure of students' abilities varies by campus.

Key Train data, which tracks student progress on WorkKeys for those individuals receiving skills upgrade training, provides further evidence that workplace literacy participants undergoing training were able to improve their workplace literacy skills. According to the Key Train data, sixty percent of participants improved their WorkKeys assessment scores by an average of 1.8 levels across all of the available assessments (see Exhibit 19). Additionally, more than half of those individuals undergoing skills upgrade training met their workplace literacy goals. Individuals demonstrated substantially more progress on Applied Math scores

than the other core assessments. Eighty percent of students receiving upgrade training improved their Applied Math scores by an average of 2.5 levels. This suggests that through upgrade training a significant proportion of participants are able to meet their occupational goals.

Exhibit 19
Progress on Key Train
August 2003 - May 2004

	<u>All Modules</u>	<u>Applied Math</u>	<u>Locating Information</u>	<u>Read for Information</u>
Number of test takers	1209	125	150	136
Average change in score	1.8	2.5	1.9	1.9
Percentage with improvement in their score	60.2 (a)	80.0	69.3	64.0
Percentage who met their goal (b)	62.3	52.0	66.0	57.4
Percentage of those who met goal who scored above their goal (b)	25	7.7	5.1	7.7

Source: BPA calculations based on Key Train data

(a) Excludes Basic Language, Math and Writing Test Scores.

(b) Calculation based on most recent test score

Attainment of LTC and Industry Based Certifications

BPA reviewed administrative records of three campuses hoping that we could derive estimates of how many participants received a LTC or industry based certification, but found that this information is not widely available in the campus' administrative databases.

Almost all of the individual pre-release program's administrative records we reviewed did not have information on how many participants received industry-based certification. The addition of such basic measures could make the administrative records a more helpful tool for providing program evaluation information for individual pre-release programs and the LCTCS.

Only one program had information on LTC certificates received by program participants in their general administrative records. Analysis of these records suggests that 30 (58.2 percent) participants received a certificate; which is above the Pre-Release program's target rate of 40 percent.

Conclusion

The Pre-Release program, in its third year of operation, has achieved a significant number of accomplishments. The program in the last two years of operation provided nearly 1,000 inmates across Louisiana with pre-release skills training in a number of areas, including workplace literacy, technical skills, work readiness, life skills and basic skills, at an average cost of roughly \$2,000 per inmate. Additionally, as shown in Exhibit 20, the program has either met or exceeded many of its target performance measures, established by the Division of Administration (DOA). The skills imparted to inmates by the Pre-Release program are essential for preparing inmates for their release; especially given the low educational attainment of inmates, limited work history and significant employment barriers they will face upon release.

Though it will be some time before long-term outcomes can be collected and the full impact of this program assessed (since the majority of program participants are still within several months of their release dates and outcomes data is currently available for only a small number of participants), preliminary outcomes data suggests that the program is yielding positive employment and earnings outcomes for, and lowering the recidivism rate of, program participants upon release.

Berkeley Policy Associates
Evaluation of Pre-Release Skills Program

Exhibit 20
Pre-Release Program Year 3 Achievement in Performance Measures, June 2004

<u>Measures</u>	<u>Number</u>		<u>Percentage</u>	
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Target</u>
Cumulative # of unduplicated participants enrolled in technical training	680	600	71.7	100.0
Cumulative # of unduplicated participants enrolled in basic skills training	563	240	59.3	40.0
Cumulative # of unduplicated participants enrolled in workplace literacy training	881	600	92.8	100.0
Cumulative # of unduplicated participants enrolled in job skills training	737	600	77.7	100.0
Cumulative # of unduplicated participants enrolled in life skills training	850	600	89.6	100.0
Cumulative # of unduplicated Education/Employment Action Plans on file	884	360	93.2	60.0
Receive Industry Based Certification	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	30.0
Earn LCTCS degree or certificate ^a	30	N.A.	58.2	40.0
Meet Workplace Literacy goal	80	N.A.	19.7	40.0
Attain Employment	24	N.A.	25.0	25.0
Retain Employment	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	70.0
Continue Education	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	30.0

Source: BPA calculations based on data from LCTCS monthly reporting forms, WorkKeys and program administrative records.

Note: N.A. signifies that either the figure is not available, or the sample size is less than thirty participants.

^a Data provided are for one program only

Appendix

Year 3 Pre-Release Program Technical Training Areas

LTC Campus/	Correctional Facility	Region	Training Area	Demand Occupation	LCTCS Certificate	Industry Based Certification	Hours
1. LTC Alexandria Campus	J. Levy Dabadie Correctional Center	6	Office Systems Technology	Reception and Information Clerk	TCA	None	225 or 170
			Electrician	Electrician Helper	TCA		300
2. LTC Avoyelles Campus	Avoyelles Correctional Center	6	Masonry	BrickMasons, Masonry Helper	TCA Masonry Helper	None	600
			Office Systems Technology	Business/Computer Specialists	TCA General Clerk and CTS Office Assistant	None	240-510
			Automotive Technology		Various TCAs and a TD in Automotive Technician	Prepares students for certification given by the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence	150-1,170
			Collision Repair Technology		A TCA in Collision Repair, Various CTSs and a TD in Collision Repair	None	435-1800
			Diesel Powered Equipment Technology		Various TCAs and TD in Diesel Powered Equipment Technician	Prepares students for certification given by the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence	480-1800
			Culinary Arts and Occupations	Cooks-Restaurant	A TCA in Entry Level Prep Cook, Various CTSs and a TD in Culinary Arts and Occupations	None	450-1785
			Horticulture		TCA Grower Technician	None	630

Berkeley Policy Associates
Evaluation of Pre-Release Skills Program

LTC Campus/	Correctional Facility	Region	Training Area	Demand Occupation	LCTCS Certificate	Industry Based Certification	Hours
3. LTC Florida Parishes Campus	Tangipahoa Parish Sheriff's Prison	2	Building Maintenance		A TCA, a CTS and a TD in Building Maintenance		360-1440
4. LTC Folkes	Dixon Correctional Institute (DCI), Louisiana State Penitentiary (LSP), and Elayn Hunt Correctional Center (EHCC)	2	Welding		TCA and a TD in Welding	Prepares students for American Welding Society Test	-1800
			Culinary Arts		A TCA in Entry Level Prep Cook, Various CTSs and a TD in Culinary Arts and Occupations	None	450-1785
			Carpentry		A TCA in Carpentry Technician, Various CTSs and a TD in Carpentry		
			Auto Mechanics		Various TCAs and TD in Automotive Technician	Prepares students for certification given by the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence	150-1,170
			Horticulture		TCA Grower Technician, Various CTSs and a TD in Horticulture Technician		
	Dixon Correctional Institute (DCI) only		Collision Repair		A TCA in Collision Repair, Various CTSs and a TD in Collision Repair	None	435-1800
	Dixon Correctional Institute (DCI) only		Communications Electronics		Various TCAs, a CTS, and a TD in Certified Communications Technician		

Berkeley Policy Associates
Evaluation of Pre-Release Skills Program

LTC Campus/	Correctional Facility	Region	Training Area	Demand Occupation	LCTCS Certificate	Industry Based Certification	Hours
	Louisiana State Penitentiary (LSP) only		Graphic Arts		Various TCAs, a CTS, and a TD in Graphic Communications		
5. LTC Natchitoches Campus	The Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Office, Corrections Division	7	AC/Refrigeration		AC/Refrigeration Helper	Prepares students for EPA certification in Air Conditioning/Refrigeration	210
			Carpentry		Carpentry Helper		225
6. LTC Shelby M. Jackson Campus	Concordia Parish Correctional Facility	6	Computer Support Specialist			MOUS, MCSE and A+	1,000
7. LTC Shreveport/Bossier Campus	The David Wade Correctional Center –Forcht-Wade Service Center (FWCC)	7	Computer Support Specialist		TCA in PC Support Technician		270
			Horticulture		TCA Grower Technician		630
8. LTC Sowela campus	The C. Paul Phelps Correctional Center (CPPCC)	5	Computer Support Specialist			Prepares students for A+ Certification Exam offered by the Computer Technology Industry, which they can take upon release	11 credit hours
9. LTC Sullivan campus	Washington Correctional Institute	2	Construction Carpentry		TCA Carpentry	Prepares students for National Certification as a Carpentry Helper 1	330
			Computer Technology			Prepares students for A+ Certification Exam offered by the Computer Technology Industry, which they can take upon release	330
10. LTC West Jefferson campus	Orleans Parish Prison	1	Masonry				400