



## Press Release

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Office of Media & Public Relations  
Phone: (404) 508-7147

### DJJ School System to Receive Dual Accreditation

**Decatur, Georgia-** After three days of evaluations, committees from both the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the Correctional Education Association (CEA) both recommended that the Department of Juvenile Justice School System be accredited.

The recommendations are the culmination of two years of work and planning on the part of DJJ's education staff. Previously, every individual school within the system had been accredited by SACS, but this marks the first time the organization has recommended accreditation for the entire system. It also marks the first time DJJ has been audited by the CEA. During the process, the combined auditing team visited eight DJJ schools, and interviewed over 130 people ranging from administrators to parents. They also reviewed the system's records.

Thomas Wellman, chair of the CEA audit commission, said he was very impressed with DJJ's results, considering the fact that it was the first time CEA had audited the agency.

"What we found was a dedicated, enthusiastic staff at all of the facilities we visited," Wellman said.

Dr. James Brown, chairman of the SACS accreditation committee praised DJJ, and said his committee found the school system met all standards.

"The evidence we have received indicates that the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice should be fully accredited," Brown said.

DJJ Commissioner Garland R. Hunt Esq. said he was proud of DJJ's education team, and appreciated how much work they had put in to the accreditation process.

"I know that all of our staff, especially our accreditation chairman Dr. Rufus Johnson worked very hard over the last two years to reach this goal," Hunt said. "We know that the youth in our care can achieve, and receiving these accreditations will help them, and it will also help us as we strive to make our school system even better."

The Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice is Georgia's 181st school district. All DJJ teachers are certified. Students in short-term RYDCs and long-term YDCs both receive 330 minutes of instruction each day year round. Students in DJJ schools can achieve a GED, high school diploma or special education diploma. All academic and vocational credits awarded are transferable with the youth upon a return to the community.

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