

Exploring STEM Educational Delivery for Youth in Norfolk Juvenile Detention Center

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“ Detained youth are vulnerable to disparities in education and STEM learning. The crisis created by COVID-19 has the potential to exacerbate those disparities resulting in deepening deficits in academic performance and marketable employment skills ”

This research will provide the foundation to develop a creative and effective model of equitable, nontraditional education, using Personal Learning Environment for Youth (PLEY), an ecosystem for STEM educational delivery.

This smart educational system can be used to effectively interconnect youth, educational practitioners, and services in the community and provide them with sought after STEM skills that will improve their life outcomes.

Focus Groups and Workshops: The purpose of phase 1 (in progress) is to generate information needed to guide the development of workshops in phase 2. Phase 1 will engage the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Center (NJDC) management and academic staff, the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice, Norfolk Public Schools, and Old Dominion University stakeholders.

Publications: Lynch, Caitlin G., and Allison T. Chappell. "Policing the school-to-prison pipeline: a qualitative study." *Journal of school violence* 20.4 (2021): 627-636.

The envisioned PLEY system will expose vulnerable youth to STEM, thus increasing their marketability and life chances. This grant prepares community stakeholders with the data needed to configure the PLEY for institutional use at the NJDC.

The extent that this program is adopted system wide, it could enrich the entire school system. This constitutes an investment in a community that overall lacks resources and access to many services and opportunities afforded to middle class youth.



Phase 2 (2023): we plan to actively engage stakeholders in discussion, problem solving, and ideation so that a PLEY proof of concept can be developed for the next steps. **Phase 3 (Summer 2023):** Engage in a qualitative case study over a period of one week at the NJDC.