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The Community Based Coalition Approach to Offender Reentry

Reducing Correctional Costs, Protecting
Public Safety and Increasing the Likelihood
of Parolee Success

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In the first seventeen months of operation, the SCBC demonstrates a significant impact on reducing costs associated with reentry incarceration while redirecting participating parolees to productive and crime-free lifestyles.

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Executive Summary

In this analysis of the Community Based Coalition model of reentry programming, a case study of the Sacramento Community Based Coalition (SCBC) is presented as a case in point of the effectiveness of this model in meeting the needs of the state, the community and the offender. In the first seventeen months of operation, the SCBC demonstrates a significant impact on reducing costs associated with reentry and incarceration while redirecting participating parolees to productive and crime-free lifestyles.

Historical Context

As of February 25, 2009 the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's Division of Adult Parole Operations supervised 155,939 parolees. Upon returning to their communities, these individuals face significant barriers to leading satisfying, productive and crime-free lifestyles. Recidivism is amplified by the lack of programs that address substance abuse, literacy and continuing education, family reunification, identification assistance and viable employment opportunities for reentry parolees.

In 2007, CDCR addressed the reentry needs of our state's parole population in the form of the Community Based Coalition (CBC) model of offender reentry. The CBC model bridges the gap between criminal justice research and policy by offering wrap-around reentry services at a centralized and accessible program site.

The initial success of the CBC model is most evident in Sacramento where CDCR, teaming with the Sacramento County Office of Education, formed the Sacramento Community Based Coalition (SCBC). The SCBC preliminary outcomes provide clear evidence to the potential of the CBC model to reduce correctional costs, protect and preserve public safety, while offering realistic opportunities for parolees to become

productive, successful and contributing community members.

Methodology

The data highlighted in this report spans from the inception of the SCBC on October 1, 2007 through February 28, 2009. Outcomes were generated using a database reporting system specifically designed for the SCBC. Certain figures are representative of active SCBC clients while others describe all SCBC enrollments during the reporting period – all figures are defined appropriately throughout the report.

Sacramento Community Based Coalition

Statistics

Program Enrollment to Date: **637**
Program Enrollment at Close of Business
February 28, 2009: **207**
Months of Program Operation: **17**
Annual Program Budget: **\$2.15 million**

Services Provided by the SCBC

The Sacramento Community Based Coalition (SCBC) provides clients with the following services:

- Job Placement and Preparation
- Computer Literacy
- GED Testing/Preparation and One-on-One Tutoring
- Parenting Courses
- Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment and Education
- On-Site Male and Female 52-Week Batterers Program
- 100% Funded Sober Living Placement
- Assistance with Obtaining Identification
- On-Site Psychologist
- Speaking Opportunities at Sacramento's Court and Community Schools
- Individualized Service Planning Based on a Client's Unique Reentry Needs
- Risk & Needs, Educational and Employability Assessments
- Community Service Opportunities

- Family Reintegration Programs through Family Study Halls, Family Events and Family Counseling
- Nutritional Education
- STD Prevention and Education
- Mentoring
- Gender Specific Programming

Phase-Based Program Structure

The program structure of the SCBC is based on best practice research that advocates for individualized service planning based on a client's unique reentry needs. A combination of assessments, face-to-face counseling and information obtained from the parole agent referral ensures that a client's programming plan is adapted to their unique reentry needs and goals.

Structured around four phases (I, II, III & Aftercare) the program provides clients with generalized assistance at reentry success and a targeted and specific individualized assistance plan focused on clients' needs.

Phase 1

During Phase I, all clients receive the following:

1. risk, needs, employment and educational assessments,
2. placement in a four-day job readiness course,
3. a four-day computer literacy course, and
4. an STD education course.

Throughout Phase I, clients are required to attend the program daily for approximately 30 days – completing the above mentioned assessments and courses along with solidifying their individualized service plan (ISP) to guide their participation in the next phase of the program.

Phase II

Phase II triggers clients to begin working towards completion of their ISP. For example, this may mean attending substance abuse treatment and employability courses for some clients, while others may focus on obtaining their GED and completing a 52-week batterers program. All

facets of Phase II are determined by the specific areas of need as outlined in the client's ISP.

Typically, a client will spend four to six months in Phase II with significant outcomes. Most clients will have completed the majority of their ISP, obtained employment, if actively looking, maintained their sobriety, and demonstrated consistency in their program attendance.

Phase III

When promoting to Phase III, a client's primary focus is completing any remaining ISP goals, preserving their employment and sobriety, and working closely with a case manager to develop an aftercare plan that will allow them to continue living productively following SCBC participation. Usually a period of 30 days leads to accomplishing Phase III, although completing this phase is entirely dependent on a client's motivation for success and the emergence of new reentry needs.

Aftercare

In the Aftercare Phase of the SCBC, a client has completed their ISP, obtained employment or enrolled in a vocational or academic educational program, maintained sobriety, and remained in good standing with all other program/reporting requirements. The client's exit plan has been solidified and any initial barriers to his or her reentry success have been addressed. The client is now ready for successful program discharge and a new classification as program alumni.

Demand for CBC Programming

The February 25, 2009 CDCR Weekly Parole Population Report identifies a Sacramento County parole population of 4085. Under the current SCBC enrollment count of 207, 5.07% of Sacramento County parolees are active clients of the programⁱ and to date the 637 parolees enrolled in the SCBC equates to 15.59% of the current County parolee population.ⁱⁱ

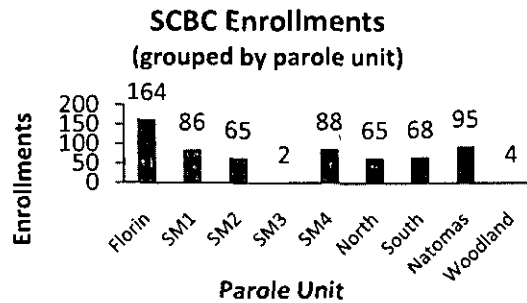


Figure 1 SCBC Enrollments

The SCBC provides services to parolees under supervision of the Florin, Metro 1-4, North, South, and Natomas parole units in Sacramento County and to the Woodland parole unit with agent approval. A total of 1093 referrals received from parole agents since the SCBC's inception represent 26.76% of the entire current Sacramento County parole population. Breaking down these referral figures even further reveals that of the 1093 referrals, as many as 86.09% (941) of SCBC referrals were voluntary. Of the

FOCUS on Demand:

1,093 referrals to the SCBC since inception
 86.09% of referred parolees voluntarily opted for enrollment in the SCBC

entire County parolee population – a significant percentage - 23.03% - requested enrollment in the SCBC by their own volition!

Based on these figures, there is a high demand for the CBC model of programming among both parole agents and parolees. With roughly 30 new enrollments scheduled each week and 30-40 new referrals received each week, there is no sign of a slowing demand for CBC services.

Program Value and Operating Cost

The 637 clients enrolled in the SCBC from October 1, 2007 through February 28, 2009 spent a combined total of 63,204 days, in the program and out of prison. The range of "days in program" is 1 day to 494 days with an average length of stay of 99.2 days.

During this same date span, approximately \$3.23 Million were allocated by CDCR to the Sacramento County Office of Education for start-up and operation of the SCBC. This amounts to just \$51.10 per client program day.ⁱⁱⁱ When compared against the current estimate of \$137 to incarcerate one individual for one day, the cost saving potential of CBC programming is astounding.

FOCUS on Cost Effectiveness.

63,204 total days spent in program among SCBC's 637 clients served to date

Average length of stay in program is 99.2 days

Operating cost of \$3.23 million over 17 months

Daily cost per client is \$51.10

Comparable costs to incarcerate are nearly \$5.5 million greater than what was spent on SCBC programming to date by the California Department of Corrections

Net savings of \$85.90 per day over incarceration costs

The costs to incarcerate 200 inmates for 99.2 days would fund a CBC for a full year with the potential to reach nearly three times the number of offenders

In fact, 63,204 days of incarceration would cost CDCR an estimated \$8.66 Million – that

represents more than two and a half times the amount allocated for CBC operation. Based on days spent in the program, the net savings of the SCBC to date compared against costs of incarceration over the same period of time is \$5.43 Million or approximately \$3.19 Million per year of program operation.

At a net savings of \$85.90 per client program day and by maintaining a daily client count of 200, the SCBC needs only 125 days of operating, or 125 days of keeping 200 clients out of prison, to save the state enough money to justify its annual cost of \$2.15 Million.^{iv}

Looking at program value in another way shows that the same dollar amount allocated to incarcerate 200 inmates for the average length of stay in the SCBC of 99.2 days would fund a CBC program for over a year with the potential to reach nearly three times the number of offenders.

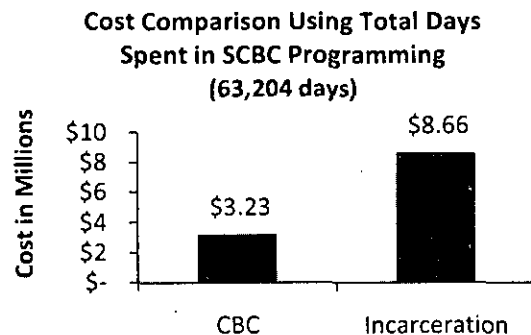


Figure 2 Cost Comparison Total Days

Public Safety

Since the October 2007 inception of the SCBC only 13.19% of clients were discharged from the program for returning to custody (county jail or state prison). A closer look at the return to custody rate indicates the length of time spent in the program directly correlates with the return to custody rate. Program data clearly illustrates that clients tend to return to custody within their first 60 days of program participation. Those clients participating for longer than 60 days experience a

significant reduction in the likelihood they will be return to prison or jail while in the SCBC.

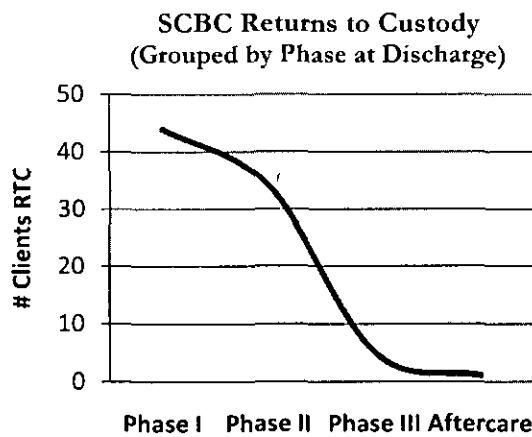


Figure 3 SCBC Returns to Custody

As an alternative to custody, the CBC model has also proven very effective. To date, 71 clients, accounting for 11.14% of all Sacramento Community Based Coalition clients, were referred to the program as a result of a remedial sanction. In other words, the CBC referral was used by the

FOCUS on Public Safety:

- 13.19% of clients were returned to custody during their participation in the SCBC
- Likelihood of returning to custody drops significantly after a client's first 60 days in the program
- 8.45% of clients mandated to attend the program were returned to custody while in the program

parole agent as means to avoid incarceration and provide the parolee with a final chance at success during reentry. Of these 71 remedial sanction clients, 74.64% (53) are still active in the program and among those discharged just 6 were returned to custody while in the program.

Discharge for a return to custody accounts for one-third of all remedial sanction discharges and

is representative of an overall remedial sanction return to custody rate of only 8.45%.

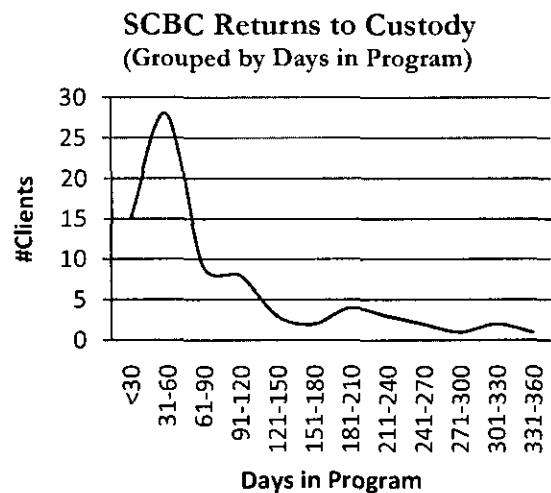


Figure 4 SCBC Returns to Custody by Days

Parolees referred to the SCBC as a remedial sanction spent a combined 6,081 days in the program during the reporting period. Estimated costs to incarcerate these 71 clients for an amount of time equal to what was spent in the program is over \$833,000. In fact, every day the 53 active remedial sanction clients remain in the program and out of prison provides a net savings to the state of \$4,292.40 per day.^v

It should be noted that if the SCBC's clients were to continue the same level of success following their participation in the program, the state could realistically see a cost savings in the area of \$15 Million annually.

Evidence of Rehabilitative Effects

Employment

SCBC's clients are becoming employed at outstanding rates during their engagement in the SCBC. Upon entering the SCBC, 23% of the 207 active clients were employed. The current SCBC employment rate is 54% - nearly double the rate of employment at program admission. Again, the correlation between length of time spent in the program and reentry success is demonstrated in SCBC's employment rate of 84.20% of Phase III clients currently employed. Among the SCBC's remedial sanction population, the employment rate at admission was just 7.7% compared to the current remedial sanction employment rate of 50%.

Employment services available to SCBC clients include job readiness, search, and retention programs as well as access to three on-site job developers. In addition the SCBC offers a number of employment training opportunities including the CalTrans Litter Abatement Program, on- and off-site placement in the Sacramento County Office of Education's Regional Occupational Program (ROP) and an on-site Green Collar Opportunity Program.

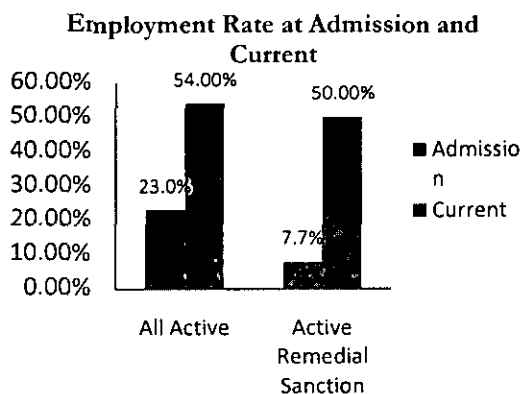


Figure 5 Employment Rate Admission/Current

In January 2009, the SCBC/Sacramento County of Office of Education was selected by CDCR and CalTrans as the administrator of an

employment training program providing litter abatement services on behalf of CalTrans. Over 75 active parolee clients engaging in SCBC services were hired through the project as full time litter abatement crew members, earning \$10 per hour for up to 150 days. During the month of February 2009, SCBC's crew members collected over 10,000 bags of trash from Sacramento's freeways.

Continuing in its tradition of service enhancement, the SCBC has augmented the employment training program to provide

FOCUS on Rehabilitation:

54% rate of employment – double the rate of employment at entry

50% rate of employment for mandated clients – nearly seven times the rate at entry

84% rate employment among Phase III clients

Overview of SCBC's employment, substance abuse, family and educational programming

parolee crew members with life skills, parenting, substance abuse, community outreach and job retention courses throughout their term of employment.

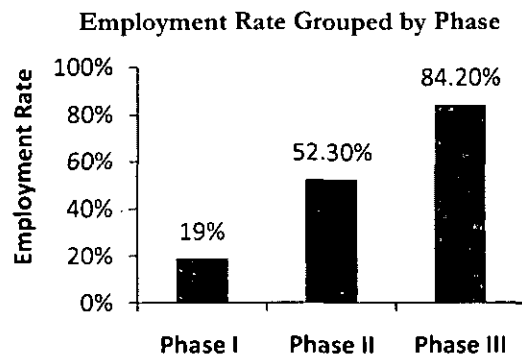


Figure 6 Employment Rate By Phase

Through the litter abatement project, SCBC clients are not only giving back to their

communities through state and federal income tax contributions and beautification projects, they are taking significant strides towards improving their post-release work history and ultimately achieving a self-sufficient, productive, and crime-free lifestyle.

As a result of placement in off-site ROP programs and the on-site ROP Entrepreneurship program, SCBC clients can earn certification in an array of areas including forklift operator, heavy equipment operator and small business operation. Upon completion of the ROP program, the client has obtained marketable skills allowing them to compete in today's job market. As of February 2009, the graduation rate of SCBC clients placed in ROP programs was 85%.

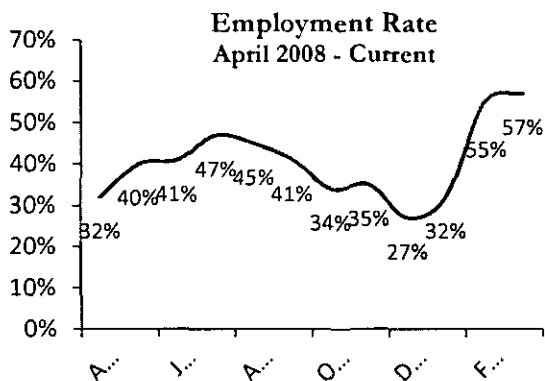


Figure 7 Employment Rate

An emerging opportunity through the Green Collar Opportunity Program offers clients an insight into the booming Green Industry. Instruction includes seminars on green technology, the green job market and the latest policy and regulatory developments. Clients are also able to gain Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) recognition upon completion of the course, allowing them to compete in California's cutting edge green industry.

Substance Abuse Recovery

Among the 637 parolees enrolled in the SCBC since its formation, 295 have engaged in on-site substance abuse programming. An additional

strength of the CBC model is the emphasis on maintaining sobriety throughout the duration of program participation and ultimately the parole term.

With the ability to administer on-site drug tests, the SCBC holds clients accountable for their substance abuse programs. Of the 281 drug tests performed during the 17 months of

FOCUS on Policy:

The cost-saving, rehabilitative and crime-reducing effects of the SCBC are justification for additional program sites in Sacramento and other counties.

operation only 53, or 18.9%, were positive for illegal substances. In these situations, parole agents were notified and case managers worked with the agent to determine the best course of action for the client – typically, increased programming at the SCBC or placement in a more intensive community-based drug treatment program.

Family Reunification

A 2008 review of program data by the SCBC revealed that nearly 300 children were associated with program clients. Family reunification is a program priority for SCBC staff. Family nights and community events are a fixture of the program. At the most recent awards ceremony in October 2008, over 100 family members of clients were in attendance to offer their support and celebration for the success of their loved ones. The 2008 holiday party was also a success with over 100 clients and their family members present. The program's on-site psychologist meets regularly with spouses, significant others and children who have been effected by the incarceration and return of their loved one.

Education

Slightly more than 50% of SCBC clients enter the program with their high school diploma or GED

upon admission to the program. To address the need for additional education, all clients are given the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) and components of the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) during their first week of program participation. While not every client will pursue educational services at the SCBC, the assessment opens up the possibility of GED testing/prep, computer literacy, independent study, individual tutoring and assistance with application to Sacramento's colleges and universities. Currently, 34 clients are in the SCBC's GED prep program. Of those nine have taken the GED subject tests passing a combined total of 21 subject tests.

Community Involvement - Mentoring

Regularly a group of SCBC clients visit Sacramento County Office of Education court and community school LINKS programs. They speak to high school students about the impact of life choices and the importance of redirecting behaviors to stay out of trouble. The LINKS program philosophy mirrors the positive direction that SCBC clients are choosing and provides an ongoing focus toward success and achievement.

Policy Recommendations

The SCBC's program data clearly illustrates that its participants are getting jobs and staying out of prison and jail – saving the State millions of dollars in the process. Although the SCBC has been the referral recipient of over 25% of Sacramento County's parolee population, the program capacity limits its reach to roughly 5% of county parolees at any given time and 15% over a 17-month period. Additionally, the best practices driving the development and operation of the SCBC encourage a community-based program site that is central and accessible to parolee community members. The existing program site, located just outside of downtown Sacramento, was chosen because of its proximity to transit, the freeway, a parole office and other rehabilitative programs. However, a number of

SCBC clients spend 1.5 to 2 hours on public transportation just to attend SCBC classes.

There is an absolute need for additional CBCs in Sacramento County; sites that are strategically located throughout the county and readily accessible to the parolee regardless of where they live. Just one additional CBC in the county would double the number of parolees served and provide parole agents with localized, viable options to address the reentry needs of their caseloads.

An additional program site in Sacramento County, coupled with the current site program, would generate an annual net savings to the state of just under \$6.4 Million county-wide while the clients are in the program. Initial results suggest that the low percentage of clients returned to custody while active in the program will translate to comparably lower rates after program participation, ultimately saving the state upwards of \$30 million annually.

Program Update

Similar data was prepared for a March 11th SCBC Steering Committee Meeting. Meeting participants included officials from the Sacramento County Office of Education, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and SCBC staff. The data, gathered just 12 days after this report, revealed some outstanding new measurements and striking improvements in the SCBC's already-impressive performance:

March 11, 2009 Active Count: **216** (as of March 11, 2009) [207 as of February 28, 2009]

March 11, 2009 Active Remedial Sanction Clients: **55** (25.5%) [53 as of February 28, 2009]

Program Referrals

Total Referrals Received to Date: **1122**

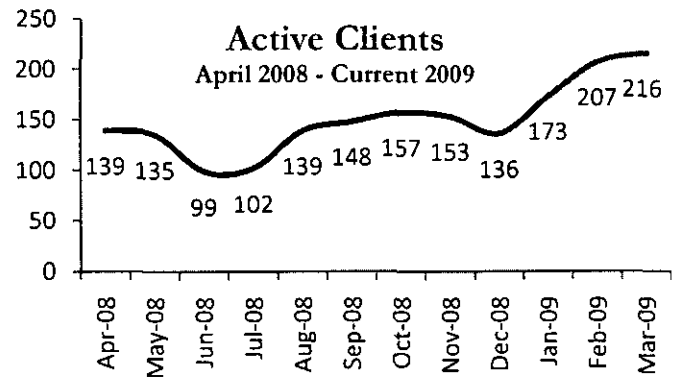


Figure 10 Active Clients

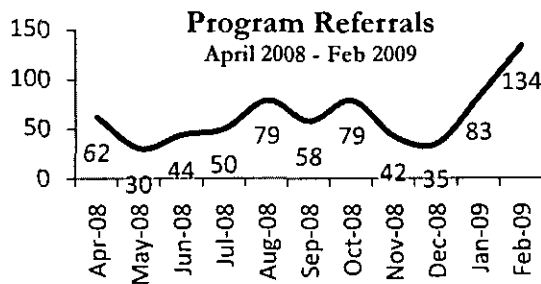


Figure 8 Program Referrals

Returns to Custody

Return to Custody (RTC) Rate=Number of clients returned to prison or jail during active participation in the SCBC

March 11, 2009 RTC Rate: **12.9%** [13.19% as of February 28, 2009]

Program Enrollments

March 11, 2009 Total Enrollments to Date: **653** [637 as of February 28, 2009]

March 11, 2009 Remedial Sanction RTC Rate: **8.5%** [8.45% as of February 28, 2009]

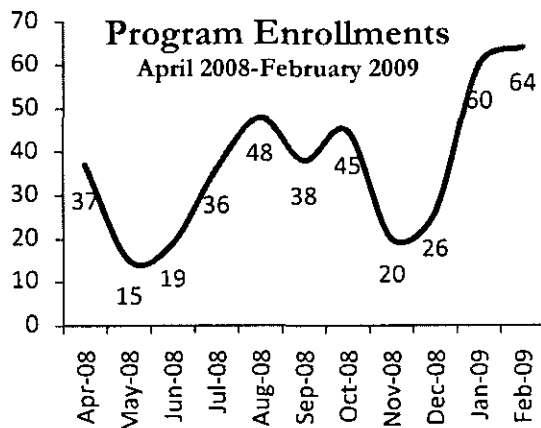


Figure 9 Program Enrollments

Employment Rates

March 11, 2009 Employment Rate: **57%** [54% as of February 28, 2009]

March 11, 2009 Remedial Sanction Employment Rate: **42%** [50% as of February 28, 2009]

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Acronyms

CBC	Community Based Coalition
CDCR	California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
GED	General Equivalency Diploma
ISP	Individualized Service Plan
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
ROP	Regional Occupational Program
RTC	Return to Custody
SCBC	Sacramento Community Based Coalition
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
TABE	Test of Adult Basic Education
WRAT	Wide Range Achievement Test
LINKS	- SCOE Court Community School Program

Contacts

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Notations

- i (207 active clients)/(4085)=5.07%
- ii (637 clients served by SCBC)/(4085)=15.59%
- iii \$3.23mil/63,204= \$51.10
- iv (200clients)(\$85.90 per day savings over incarceration)(125 days) = \$2,700,400
- v [(\$51.10)(\$137)]-[(53)(\$51.10)]= \$4292.40