OPERATING PROCEDURES

SUBJECT: **COGNITIVE INTERVENTION PROGRAM**

AUTHORITY: Tex. Educ. Code § 19.004; Windham Board Policy (WBP)-03.02, "Windham School District Superintendent Responsibilities and Authority"

APPLICABILITY: Windham School District (WSD)

POLICY:

WSD will provide a Cognitive Intervention Program (CIP) designed to reduce recidivism, reduce the cost of confinement or imprisonment and to provide incentives to offenders to behave in positive ways during confinement or imprisonment. The WSD CIP will facilitate the development of personal responsibility, anger management skills, impulse control, and life goals, as well as adaptive attitudes and beliefs.

PROCEDURES:

I. Purpose

The CIP is a voluntary program for offenders that addresses thinking errors that lead to criminal behavior. The overarching aim of this program is to explain how thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs are connected to behavior. Criminal behaviors do not occur arbitrarily, but instead are caused by thinking errors.

II. Program Description

The WSD CIP will:

A. Provide facilitated instruction that addresses thinking errors that lead to criminal behavior;

B. Assist students in changing their criminal thinking and behavior to prosocial thinking and behavior;

C. Guide students to identify their thinking errors and modify those thoughts so that

their criminal behaviors change; and

D. Explain how thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs are connected to behavior.

III. Program Organization

A. The content and processes included in the CIP are structured to provide a minimum of 150 hours of classroom instruction and completion of all lessons and activities.

B. Individual class sessions will be at least three hours and 15 minutes in length.

C. A specified curriculum defines the scope and sequence of skills and suggested program materials.

D. Offenders may participate in this program solely or concurrently with other educational programs as appropriate to meet individual learner needs; however, students will not be enrolled in the CIP more than one class period per day.

E. CIP classes will be held in classrooms located in the Education Department and will not be held in other locations on the unit, with the exception of CIP offered as a component of the GRAD or Diversion programs.

IV. Instructional Design

A. The CIP is competency-based in its design. Students must demonstrate knowledge of the basic concepts and skills taught in the class, and they must be able to demonstrate adequate application of these skills to the teacher.

B. The theoretical framework of this program includes cognitive behavioral, social learning, motivational interviewing, and Risk Need Responsivity model.

C. Students are exposed to all program elements. The major elements of the program consist of lecture, group discussion, individual assignments, role plays, video lessons, and other dynamic activities.

D. The use of audiovisual aids, group discussions, and group activities enable students of diverse academic abilities to learn together in a class setting.

E. Role plays will involve positive scenarios; touching is not allowed.

F. Homework is incorporated throughout the curricula to increase student learning and enhance behavior change. It takes significant repetition of new knowledge and skills for students to break out of their offending cycles. This repetition must include using learned information and skills in their natural environment. Both active and passive homework is included.

G. Guest speakers may be used for supplemental activities; however, guest speakers

may not take the place of any lesson or activity in the curriculum.

H. Students will not attend the computer lab during their CIP class.

I. CIP classes will not be routinely scheduled for the library; however, it may be acceptable for the class to visit the library on occasion, as long as the library time involves a structured activity that is tied directly to a lesson in the curriculum.

J. Due to the type of offenders and the sensitive nature of the issues being discussed in the CIP class, a trained CIP substitute teacher is preferred.

K. If the principal knows that the CIP teacher will not be in class for more than three consecutive days and there is not a trained CIP substitute teacher available, the class will be suspended pending the return of a trained teacher.

L. The CIP teachers are responsible for administering all pre and post-tests for their students to include the Measure of Criminal Attitudes and Associates (MCAA), Measure of Criminal Thinking Styles (MOCTS), and lesson quizzes. All pre-tests are administered within the first three days of the beginning of a new class, post-tests are administered at the end of each lesson, and the MCAA and MOCTS at the end of course completion.

M. Teachers must scan the Life Skills answer sheets weekly; however, immediate scanning after test administration is preferred.

N. The CIP teachers will implement the approved curricula with fidelity and integrity. Teachers may supplement the approved curricula with creditable resources not supplant.

V. Teacher Training

A. It is highly recommended that experienced classroom teachers with superb classroom management skills, who are able to neutrally facilitate difficult and controversial topics, be considered for this type of class.

B. Teachers will successfully participate in the required CIP training and be approved by the Division of Special Programs and Populations no more than one year before their teaching assignment begins. Hence, if a teacher does not teach CIP for a year, that teacher must repeat the training sequence.

C. This initial training is followed by a two to three day observation, demonstration, and evaluation period in existing CIP classes.

D. Proper training is vital for the success of the program and the improved climate of the school.

E. Training for new CIP teachers is typically scheduled once a month.

F. A minimum of three participants is required for the training to be held.

G. It is highly recommended that additional teachers be trained on each facility to serve as substitute or replacement teachers when needed.

VI. Student Qualifications

A. Offenders may be enrolled at any time during their sentence.

B. Since course completion does not depend on academic background, students of all educational achievement levels may be enrolled, including those who have received a high school diploma or High School Equivalency (HSE) certificate.

C. The class primarily targets those who are referred by the staff for disciplinary infractions, poor attitudes, and poor problem solving skills.

D. The class is also appropriate for recidivists and students who voluntarily request it.

E. Offenders may take the class more than once if they request the class and the school staff agrees to the placement; however, offenders who have not already participated in the program will have higher priority for enrollment in the program than those who request to repeat it.

F. If an offender has taken CIP at least 150 hours and has completed every lesson and activity, the offender can take the course again after one year has lapsed between the first and the second enrollment.

VII. Student Selection

A. The principal or counselor is responsible for the selection and placement of offenders into the CIP in accordance with the Individualized Treatment Plan (ITP) process.

B. In addition, the principal or counselor may solicit participation by publicizing the class openings through posters, newsletters, etc.

C. A student claiming completion of the CIP during a prior incarceration shall not be excused from full participation during the current incarceration.

D. A student transfer who has completed a portion of the curriculum at another unit may be placed into the curriculum cycle to avoid repetition, but the receiving teacher will determine satisfaction with program completion requirements.

E. Once a student agrees to participate in the CIP and is enrolled in the class, it is no longer considered a voluntary program. If the offender refuses program participation, the procedures for non-voluntary programs will apply, as described in OP-09.18, "Withdrawing Offenders from Education Programs."

F. When an offender is referred to the CIP for behavioral reasons, it is indicated as a need on the offender's ITP and is no longer considered a voluntary program.

VIII. Attendance Accounting

The teacher is responsible for recording daily attendance on the class attendance sheet, in accordance with OP-09.02, "Student Attendance Accounting."

IX. Student Records

A. The teacher will maintain a record of lessons completed by each participant using the Cognitive Intervention Student Progress Record (SPR). These records will be reviewed and updated daily to avoid errors in documenting student attendance, performance, and lesson completion.

B. The SPR card is a state document and should never be copied or in the hands of an offender. When not in use, they should be in a locked area.

C. An area on the back of the SPR is devoted to teacher comments or concerns, which will be used to document conversations with students regarding their progress, mastery, or positive aspects of class participation. Signed and dated comments in this area may serve as supporting documentation for teachers' decisions to not grant certificates, drop students for lack of participation or lack of progress, or request a completion exemption. Copies of disciplinary cases and signed program refusal forms may be attached to the back of the SPR as additional documentation.

D. Upon request, a copy of the SPR will be scanned to the unit of destination if a student is transferred. All original SPR cards shall remain on the original unit.

E. When a student completes or is dropped from the class, the drop/completion code will be entered on the education screen of the computer.

F. The SPR card will be kept for a minimum of two years following the student's exit from the class.

G. If the student was denied a certificate of completion, the SPR card will be kept until the offender successfully completes the program or is released from the TDCJ.

X. Student Removal

A. Prior to requesting that the student be dropped for lack of progress, the teacher will document discussions with the student about the problem behavior(s) on the back of the SPR card.

B. Dropping a student for lack of progress does not absolve a student from the responsibility for completing the program, if a need for the program is stated on

the ITP. When dropping a student for lack of progress, follow the procedures described in OP-09.18.

XI. Student Evaluation

Completion of CIP is based on the following:

A. Demonstrated knowledge and application of the core elements of the curriculum;

B. Consistent and satisfactory student participation;

C. Completion of all lessons and activities, including the relapse prevention plan;

D. A minimum of 150 hours of attendance;

E. Completion of all pre and post-tests associated with CIP (MCAA, MOCTS, and individual lesson assessments); and

F. All lessons and activities must be completed within one year from the beginning of the CIP instruction. If not completed within one year, the student must start over at lesson one in order to receive a certificate.

XII. Offender Tutors

A. One offender tutor may help with classroom instruction.

B. Tutors will be offenders who have recently completed the CIP successfully.

C. Tutors help new students learn the basic problem solving models and serve as role models to the students.

D. Teachers may not keep completers on the class roster in order to serve as tutors; tutors must be assigned as teacher aides.

E. Offenders will not serve as tutors in the CIP more than two curricular cycles.

F. Tutors may be removed at any time at the discretion of the teacher or principal.

XIII. Certificates

The teacher will issue a Cognitive Intervention Certificate of Achievement (available through the Printing and Imaging Technology class) when a student has completed all of the program requirements.

XIV. Aftercare

A. Aftercare is a term used to describe classes provided to students post program. Aftercare classes may help students retain and improve the problem solving and prosocial thinking skills taught in the class.

B. If implemented, the class will meet for up to three days after a CIP class has ended and before another CIP class begins. Each class will be held for approximately three hours and 15 minutes per class period.

C. Participation in an aftercare class is voluntary; however, once students agree to be placed in an aftercare class, they are responsible for their attendance until they are dropped.

D. Students are selected for the class based on need and voluntary request. Priority will be given to those nearing their projected release date.

E. In addition to a course review, Aftercare will focus on the Criminal Addictive Cycle, Franklin Reality Model, Thinking Reports, and Problem-Solving Model as well as addressing specific needs of the students.

XV. Program Evaluation

The CIP is evaluated on an ongoing basis using the following measures.

A. The MCAA is a self-report measure to determine criminal tendencies of those with whom they associate and an assessment of their pro-criminal attitudes.

B. The MOCTS assesses for the presence of maladaptive thinking styles underlying criminal and other antisocial behavior.

C. Lesson quizzes assess the course content associated with each lesson.

D. Student Certificates of Completion are granted to students who successfully complete all the course requirements.

Signature on file
Dr. Latreace Craig, Director
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