

Investing in Inmate Education and Technologies Saves Taxpayers Money

With over two million inmates currently in correctional facilities across the country, the United States incarcerates far more people per capita than any other country in the world, according to the [Bureau of Justice Statistics](#).

This means that the United States spends more money than any other country—an average of almost one billion dollars per state is spent on incarceration, with cost overruns, as reported by the [Pew Center on the States and the Vera Institute of Justice's Center on Sentencing and Corrections and Cost-Benefit Analysis Unit](#).

In fact, states have seen their corrections expenditures nearly quadruple over just the past two decades, and U.S. taxpayers are paying the price. In the wake of the Trump Administration's promise to reexamine federal government spending, considerable bipartisan attention has been paid to criminal justice reform.

Prisons as punishment alone are not working. While **650,000 inmates are released every year**, a [National Institute of Justice study](#) found that within one year of release, more than half (56.7%) of released prisoners are rearrested; within three years of release, two-thirds (67.8%) of released prisoners are rearrested; and, within five years, more than three-quarters (76.6%) of released prisoners are rearrested.

One public perception is that today's correctional facilities are not rehabilitating inmates, they are simply housing criminals. It is time that attention shifts from incarceration to rehabilitation. One solution offers a high return on investment both monetarily and morally: ***inmate education***.

The **cost to educate inmates** and help them become productive members of society is much less than the billions of dollars spent annually on incarceration. In fact, investing in inmate education actually saves money. A [recent study from Lois Davis](#), a senior policy researcher at the RAND Corporation, shows that for every dollar spent on education programs (including basic education, GED, and post-secondary education) between *four and five dollars is saved on reincarceration costs*.

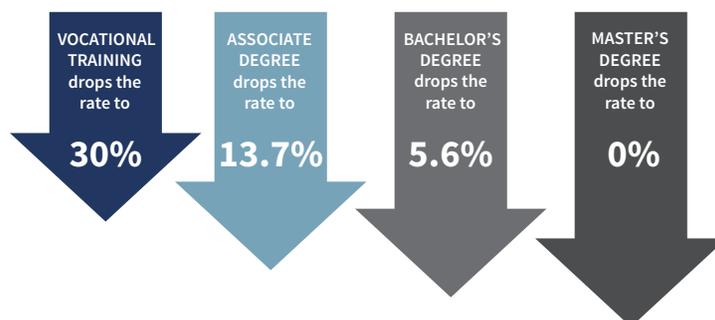


The cycle of incarceration, rearrest, and return to prison ultimately burdens the American taxpayer. But investing in education has been proven to keep inmates out of prison and help them secure a future that benefits everyone. **Data consistently shows** that education drastically reduces the likelihood that an inmate will reoffend and return to prison. For example, when inmates receive vocational training, the recidivism rate drops to approximately 30%. The recidivism rate drops to 13.7% with an associate degree and to 5.6% with a bachelor's degree. Once an inmate receives a master's degree, the recidivism rate is so low that it is statistically insignificant.

As a society, we can debate whether prisoners should be afforded the privilege of higher education behind bars, but the numbers clearly show that education and training in prisons work—to the benefit of everyone. According to Gerard Robinson, a scholar at the [American Enterprise Institute](#), “economically, it doesn't make sense to keep people incarcerated as long as we have

with no great results. The right thing to do is not only give them a second chance, but to also admit the fact that many of them didn't receive a first chance at school.”

When inmates participate in educational programs, the recidivism rate drops significantly.



The Challenges Ahead

Elected officials and policy makers can no longer afford to take a hands-off approach with their correctional facilities. The use of integrated technology solutions can make a prison or a jail safer, more effective, and more cost-efficient. Through robust public-private partnerships and proven innovative solutions, these partnerships can be leveraged to offer the best solutions, educational and vocational content, and safety services. In addition, with the use of innovative technologies, those running these institutions can address important social and operational issues such as education, re-entry and recidivism. Partnership and procurement decisions will have long-term impacts for elected officials, policy makers, budget staff, and society. The same is true for education programming in any correctional setting.

Outside the walls of jails and prisons, technology has advanced rapidly with mobile phones and tablets now a part of our daily lives. These same technology efficiencies are creating a better method to achieve positive outcomes inside the walls. Making a tablet available to every inmate is a vital component to the support of safety, security, and rehabilitation measures. Tablets provide inmates with educational content, entertainment, inmate requests to staff, commissary ordering, and a variety of other services. In many states, correctional officials have learned that technology can be leveraged, controlled, and managed effectively to increase positive outcomes.



Dr. Turner Nashe, GTL Senior Vice President of Educational Services, is an entrepreneur, inventor, innovator, and recognized leader in building technology that facilitates delivery of educational content to security sensitive industries such as correctional facilities, hospitals, and schools. Dr. Nashe explains that how we deliver education to inmates is as important as the curriculum. “We lose sight of the fact that inmates are being incarcerated in prison as young as 18. These folks are digital natives. All they’ve ever done is grow up on a small screen. Instead of reaching small groups of prisoners in a physical classroom, we have the opportunity to reach a much broader group of inmates through classrooms presented on tablets.”

Recent studies have shown that after servicing over 20,000 inmate-students for the past three years in California, GTL’s services were viewed as a lifeline to enlightenment and rehabilitation. They are playing a

key role in rebuilding lives by providing a continuum of care and progression.

Education is the path to success, giving inmates a future free from a jail cell. Putting educational content into the hands of inmates is a win-win for all parties involved. Inmates become better-educated, productive members that benefit society; taxpayers save money; and governmental spending on incarceration is drastically reduced as fewer inmates return to a life of crime.

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<http://www.gtl.net/correctional-facility-services/inmate-services/education/>

ABOUT GTL

GTL serves over 1.9 million inmates in 32 state departments of corrections and 800 counties across the USA. Our more than 25 years of experience and the quality of our customer service have made us the leader in providing solutions to the correctional space. We provide technology infrastructure, automated services, education, and communication solutions for the corrections industry. GTL’s focus is on helping state, local, and federal customers solve real-world problems. Our products and services are given increased security and scrutiny over typical consumer equivalents to assure their reliance in any correctional system.