



# CASE STUDY

## MARVIN W. FOOTE YOUTH SERVICES CENTER CHERRY CREEK SCHOOL DISTRICT, ENGLEWOOD, CO

### MEETING THE INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION NEEDS OF INCARCERATED YOUTH

**Students break the cycle with a 26.8% post-test increase as a result of personalized learning experiences through technology-based curriculum**

The Marvin W. Foote Youth Services Center is a maximum-security establishment designed to hold youth who are preadjudicated and awaiting disposition on their charges. While at the center, they are provided with services to meet their educational and affective needs.

The education program is in operation 215 days a year and is facilitated by Cherry Creek School District staff. It serves an average of 40 to 60 juveniles at any given time. Students range in age from 10 to 18 years old and can be in the facility for as little as an hour and up to two years or beyond, if necessary. Personalizing learning for such a diverse group of students with vastly different backgrounds and academic achievement levels can be extremely challenging.

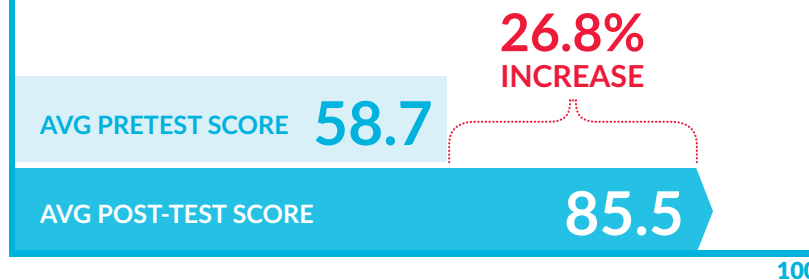
#### at-a-glance

**Marvin W. Foote Youth Services Center of Cherry Creek School District**  
Englewood, CO

- 48% White
- 32% Black
- 17% Hispanic
- 2% Asian
- 1% Other

#### 10- to 15-Day Students' Results Using Odysseyware

Students who did not pass the pretest had to work through the lesson and take a post-test to track progress.



Prescriptive learning paths are created based on their current levels of mastery. In this way, content can be pulled across various grade levels to target specific standards and learning gaps.

Assessing and addressing the students' individual needs helps to rebuild that trust.

—Elizabeth Brown, Teacher





Through the creation of custom English Language Arts courses using Odysseyware's course customization tool, and with the ability to use Odysseyware's Credit Recovery Mode, students' achievement levels are now assessed within the first seven days of enrollment at the center.

## Leveraging Technology to Meet Unique Learner Needs

When Elizabeth Brown first began teaching at the center in 1997, students were enrolled in courses based on their current age and grade level. Ms. Brown found that the one-size-fits-all model did not address learning gaps and perpetuated the cycle of academic failure for many of her students. Ms. Brown turned to technology and Odysseyware for a better alternative to help her students break this cycle. Through the creation of custom English Language Arts courses using Odysseyware's course customization tool, and with the ability to use Odysseyware's Credit Recovery Mode, students' achievement levels are now assessed within the first seven days of enrollment at the center. Prescriptive learning paths are created based on their current levels of mastery. In this way, content can be pulled across various grade levels to target specific standards and learning gaps.

"For many of my students, this is the first time they've actually received instruction at their particular achievement level," said Ms. Brown. Because they have been pushed through the system rather than provided with personalized learning experiences, many of her students "think they're stupid," a factor that she suspects contributes to their behavior problems.

The teachers at Marvin W. Foote Youth Services Center go to great lengths to foster a safe environment for their students, as many enter the facility with a deep mistrust of adults. According to Ms. Brown, assessing and addressing their individual needs helps to rebuild that trust. Personalized learning also allows the students to experience a measure of academic success, sometimes for the first time, and builds their confidence with the eventual goal of filling in their learning gaps and equipping them for success when they leave the center.

### Credit Accrual & GED Prep

Students are able to accrue credit during their time at the center through the standards-aligned program, and high school students can utilize Odysseyware's GED test-prep course to help them succeed in passing the high school equivalency test.