

INTRODUCTION 2007

PUBLIC SERVICE EDUCATION

Public service education comprises the body of subject matter and planned learning experience designed to prepare persons for selected occupations necessary to accomplish the mission of municipal, county, state, and federal governments. When private enterprise fails to provide adequate services, publicly institutionalized solutions are found. In most instances, local governments are called upon to develop solutions. If counties or municipalities cannot achieve results, it may be necessary for state government to provide services needed by the public. Then, if state government fails to deliver, the federal government inherits the responsibility. However, more and more frequently a combination of local, state, and federal involvement is necessary to cope with the needs of the public and the environment. Public/private partnerships for the delivery of services are also an expanding alternative.

The rapid growth in population over the past years and the resulting urbanization, with its social, economic, and ecological problems, has required that expanded services in the public interest be provided. This has made the development of public service education programs a necessity. The programs may be grouped into the following cluster areas: Instructional Services, Environmental Technologies, Practical Arts, Criminal Justice, Fire Fighting, and Public Administration.

Regulatory procedures involving licensure, certification, or registration in certain public service occupations have been established which effect educational program operation. State licensure or certification is required for many public service occupations.

The public service education programs may be subdivided into three main levels of purpose. The exploration courses offered in grades 6-9 are designed to provide students with an overview of the delivery system to enable them to make informed and meaningful choices of occupations in the criminal justice and public service fields. The practical arts courses offered in grades 9-12 are designed to teach students practical generic skills which, though applicable to some occupations, are not designed to prepare students for entry into a specific occupation. The job preparatory programs are designed to provide knowledge and skills that prepare students for employment in a specific public service occupation or in a cluster of related occupations.

Reinforcement of basic skills in language, mathematics, and reading appropriate for the job preparatory programs is provided through career classroom instruction and applied laboratory procedures or practice.

The career student organization (CSO), the Florida Public Service Association, Inc. (FPSA, Inc.) is an appropriate method for providing leadership training experience and for reinforcing specific knowledge and skills in the public service education programs. The activities of the organization, when provided, must be an integral part of the specific program and must complement the objectives of the program.