

# Juvenile Justice Commission County of Santa Clara

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## SANTA CLARA COUNTY JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION INSPECTION REPORT

### WILLIAM F. JAMES BOYS' RANCH MAY 2010

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The William F. James Boys' Ranch (Ranch) is a residential rehabilitative program operated by the Santa Clara County Probation Department for boys 15 1/2 to 18 years old. The Santa Clara County Juvenile Justice Court commits youth to the program. The goal of the program is to give the youth tools to successfully reintegrate into their families and the community. The Ranch is located on Malaguerra Avenue in Morgan Hill, CA.

The Santa Clara County Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) visited the Ranch for this inspection on January 26, 2010, February 9, 2010, February 21, 2010, March 12, 2010 and March 25, 2010 pursuant to California Welfare and Institutions Code Section 229. Two Commissioners also met staff from the California Youth Outreach program at their office on April 6, 2010.

This report reflects the observations and information gathered during the inspection visits. The report includes information regarding the population, the medical and mental health clinics, school programs, recreation and support programs, and the physical appearance of the facility. Reports made available to the Commissioners were reviewed. The Commissioners concerns, recommendations and a summary statement are included.

#### II. POPULATION

The licensed capacity for the Ranch is 96. The Santa Clara County Probation Department implemented what is known as the "Enhanced Ranch Program" (ERP) in August 2006 based on a nation model developed in Missouri (discussed in greater detail below). This program requires a significant reduction in the population, as it is based on small group therapy. Last year the capacity under the ERP program was 60 residents, this

consisted of five pods (dormitories) with 12 minors each. The County of Santa Clara approved an additional of 24 beds because the Ranch waiting list at Juvenile Hall had increased over time. In January 2009, when the JJC inspected the Ranch, there were 75 youth on the waiting list. With the additional beds, this number was reduced to 9 by January 26, 2010, and the average number of days on the waiting list was 8 days.

The following is a break down of the residents by age and ethnicity on January 26, 2010:

<b>Age</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Population %</b>
15	2	3%
16	12	32%
17	34	47%
18 and older	13	18%
Total	72	100%

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Population %</b>
Hispanic	60	83%
Black	8	11%
White	2	3%
Asian	2	3%
Other	0	0
Total	72	100%

### **III. STAFFING**

The Ranch staff is assigned to the Ranch by Probation Department. Staff includes a Probation Manager, 6 Supervising Probation Counselors, 30 Probation Counselors II, 15 Probation Counselors I, 13 Probation Assistants (4 positions are vacant) and 29 Extra Help Counselors. One Probation Counselor II is assigned to the Enterprise Program, while 2 Probation Counselors II are assigned to the Aftercare Program.

Three Supervising Probation Counselors supervise all shifts. Two Counselors manage the 6 pods and treatment programs. Each Counselor is responsible for the supervision of 3 pods.

Staff has received extra training in Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment (CBT) techniques. Staff is acquiring more experience in the use of CBT techniques according to the Probation Manager. Several staff at the Ranch are trained to do the CBT training of new staff. At the time of our first visit, new hires and temporary help had been trained. Part-time staff had not yet received all of the training. Training is focused on the difference between corrections and treatment, emphasizing the benefits of treatment.

The legal minimum staff to youth ratio is 1 to 15. The Enhanced Ranch Program ratio of staff to youth is 1 to 6.

#### **IV. FACILITY**

The James Ranch was neat and clean. One of the problems noted in last year's report was the condition of the walkways. All of the walkways have been redone. Facilities Services of the Santa Clara County Facilities and Fleet Department is responsible for the maintenance and repairs of the Ranches.

##### **Living Units**

The Commissioners found all of the living units neat and clean. The five temporary pods located in one building are very small with six bunk beds and a small living area with a couch in each. The plan for the James Ranch is to remodel this space. There would be new living units with attached counseling rooms and classrooms. There currently is a capital projects request to remodel the existing pods.

The two new pods are self-contained as they have rooms for counseling and groups. They are more spacious and lend themselves to the concepts of the Enhanced Ranch Program.

##### **Kitchen and Cafeteria**

During our inspection of the James Ranch, Commissioners had lunch in the cafeteria and ate at tables with some of the youth. The majority of the youth with whom Commissioners spoke during the lunch period were positive in their comments regarding the meals. Commissioners all agreed that the meal served was excellent. However, a few youth thought that the servings were rather small and several minors complained that they had eggs for breakfast every day. The Probation Manager said that cereal is always available at breakfast. Two of the recommendations in last year's JJC report involved complaints regarding the quantity of food. One was to explain to the youth the reduced caloric intake menu and the other was to use creative approaches to increase the caloric intake without violating the federal/reduced cost lunch agreement. Following the recommendation, the Probation Manager developed a nutritional education program explaining the reasons for the menu selections.

The head cook led the inspection team through the kitchen, the refrigerated area, the freezer area and the storage area. Appropriate temperatures were noted on the refrigerator and freezer units, and the food storage areas were organized and clean. State law requires that the dietician compile a meal menu with specific nutritional and caloric requirements. After interviewing the staff as to menu requirements and overall sanitation conditions, it was noted that they were in compliance with the requirements of Title 15 of the California Code of Regulations.

The dining area was open, clean and light. The configuration of the tables suited the pod units of 12.

### **Safety**

The Santa Clara Sheriff's Department provides security at the Ranch. Deputies work an overtime shift seven days a week, from 9:00 am to 9:00 pm, during which time, the assigned deputy drives the perimeter of the Ranch property every hour. The deputy is otherwise stationed in a patrol car at the front entrance gate. Should an emergency occur outside these assigned hours, Ranch staff is instructed to contact 911 and the deputy assigned to that beat area will respond. The double-gated Sally Port has been implemented at the main entrance to the Ranch.

The 2009 Annual Fire and Life Safety inspection was conducted on November 17, 2009 by the County of Santa Clara, Department of Planning and Development, Office of the Fire Marshal. There were nine violations noted, which were remedied prior to the 30-day re-inspection.

## **V. PROGRAMS**

### **Enhanced Ranch Program (ERP)**

The Enhanced Ranch Program is based on the Missouri Model. This model was developed by the Missouri Juvenile Corrections Program and is an evidence-based treatment approach which has been shown to be an effective means of reducing subsequent delinquent behavior in juveniles. It consists of four Phases. Phase 1 is behavior compliance: the youth is to follow the rules and ranch structure. This initial phase lasts for the 30 days. In Phase 2, the youth's programs start. Youth participate in programs, such as the Gang Redirect program, the Drug/Alcohol program, the Domestic Violence program, and the Sex Offender program. Phase 3 is reuniting the family. Parents participate in this program as part of the youth's rehabilitation. Parents are brought in for family counseling. Parents are part of the solution. The youth can't go home until the family comes to three counseling sessions. Phase 4 is preparing the youth to return to the community. The ERP program is 6 to 8 months depending on the youth's progress through the program. Daily group counseling is an integral part of ERP. Two Commissioners attended a brief mid-day session in one of the pods. The boys sat in a circle and discussed issues that had come up during the day (lying and trust, following directions and responding appropriately to volatile situations). The boys referred to the expectations of the program levels. One boy clearly articulated all of the components of the ERP levels and was applauded by the other members of the group.

The National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) was commissioned by Santa Clara County Probation Department to evaluate the implementation of the Enhanced Ranch Program. Their report dated July 24, 2009 was entitled "An Assessment of the

Enhanced Ranch Program Santa Clara County Probation Department.” The NCCD report includes an extensive description of the Enhanced Ranch Program.

The NCCD report stated that approximately 40% of the youth in the ERP are committed to the Ranches for a felony crime against a person, which includes robbery, first degree burglary, felony threat, felony assault, kidnapping and felony sex offenses. Prior to the ERP, the percentage was 30%. The California Legislature recently modified the law and consequently youth who have committed more serious crimes are being sent to the ranches as opposed to commitment to state detention facilities.

The NCCD looked at the following variables to assess the outcomes for youth confined to the ERP:

	Old Ranch Program	ERP
New probation violations while in Ranch Program	23%	8%
New arrest while in Ranch Program	24%	17%
New probation violations within 12 mo. of exiting the Ranch Program	11%	9%
New arrest within 12 mo. of exiting the Ranch Program.	31%	28%

The NCCD looked at the number of behavioral incidents at the Ranches, such as gang-related fights, gang activity, disruptive conduct and possession of contraband. The total number of incidents in the old Ranch program was 4647 over 24 months. The total number of incidents for the ERP is 1294 in 18 months. With 475 youth in the previous program and 262 in the ERP, the average number of incidents per individual in the old Ranch program was 9.8 and in the ERP, 4.9 per individual.

According to the data, there has been a positive decrease in all areas with the implementation of the ERP. The areas with the least improvement are after the youth leaves the Ranch Program.

**Enterprise Program**

The Enterprise Program offers the following vocational programs at the Ranch: 1) construction, 2) welding, 3) computer technology and 4) kitchen plus off Ranch projects. In addition, plans are being developed to add a culinary arts program to the list of vocational programs that are offered at the Ranch. The Ranch staff members, as part of the culinary arts program, are working on a plan that would provide meals to the California Fire Department staff at the Fire Camp in Morgan Hill. Also, the program is looking into the possibility of providing meals at the Probation Department’s Holden Training Center.

Youth learn about agriculture by cultivating vegetables in the green house. The Ranch also has a horticulture program with county parks that involves replanting native plants.

The money the youth earns is paid after the youth successfully completes the Aftercare program. Earnings are used first to pay court awarded victim restitution, plus any assessed fines and fees. If any money is left, this goes to the youth.

According to the Probation Manager, even before the report by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency was released, the Probation Department recognized that when the youth returned to the community from ERP the incidents of probation violations and new arrests did not decrease significantly. In an effort to improve the successful transition from the Ranch to the community, the Enterprise Program has added a new component: a 10 to 12 week work-study program at the Ranch. The youth work in one of the vocational areas usually Monday through Thursday and attend school on Friday, usually Independent Studies. The youth earn a stipend of \$250 for eight days of work. The youth can say they work for Santa Clara County. The Commissioners saw several youth in the program when we visited the vocational program.

With the downturn in the economy, youth are having a harder time finding employment and/or apprenticeships. There is a waiting list of 1000 to 1200 to get into an apprenticeship. Employment is critical if the youth are to succeed.

Staff want to develop opportunities, such as employment, to help youth get jobs that can support them and help them move to new areas, especially if gang issues are a problem.

### **Aftercare Program**

Aftercare and the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) (consisting of a Probation Officer/Case Manager, Ranch Probation Counselor, Pathway's Counselor, Mental Health and Education Counselors, Probation Community Worker and Community Based Organizations) establish a treatment plan about three weeks prior to youth's release from the Ranch. Once released, youth are in the Aftercare Program for a six-month period. During the first ten-weeks of release, the youth are in the "pre-release" stage of Aftercare, during which they are supervised by a combination of Ranch Counselors, Community Workers and Deputy Probation Officers. While in the pre-release stage, a minor can be returned to the Ranch without a court order, or in some situations to Juvenile Hall, for violating the release plan. The remaining 3 1/2 months of an Aftercare Program is a standard period under the control of the geographically assigned Deputy Probation Officers.

Commissioners met with one of the Aftercare Counselors. Some changes in the Aftercare Program had occurred since the Juvenile Justice Commission's last inspection. There are now two full time Aftercare Counselors who report directly to the Probation Manager. They have divided the county in half for supervision purposes. These positions are for two years, and the Counselors rotate so you have one new Counselor coming in and one leaving after two years. This change occurred when the extra 24 beds were added. Each Aftercare Counselor supervises 20 to 25 youth.

The Aftercare Counselors are responsible for monitoring youth performance during their 10-week initial release. This includes visits to youth's home. In addition, their responsibilities include weekly visits to Juvenile Hall to conduct orientation sessions for youth about to be transferred into the Ranch Program. A Probation Community Worker is located at the Ranch to provide a resource to the Aftercare Counselor in working with youth to prepare them for transition back to the community.

When the Aftercare Counselor was asked about the Aftercare Program performance, he was unable to show any data on Aftercare failures compared to previous years. Current statistics showed 89 youth in the program with 28 pre-release failures or about 31%. There are currently five youth in the Aftercare 10-week restitution program.

Concerns expressed in the interview included: 1) youth are being released prior to being fully changed in their attitudes, 2) the constant turnover in staff is impeding the efforts to rehabilitate the youth, and 3) the economy has decreased the number of jobs available to youth after leaving the Ranch.

One of the programs established in the last year has been "Aftercare Night." The program has been established to provide a means of support to the youth during their 10-week pre-release program. The program offers support services, recognition of outstanding performance and provides a way to help the youth resolve issues that occur during the 10-week period.

### **Teaching Important Pro-Social Skills (TIPS)**

TIPS is a comprehensive therapeutic model. It is a 10-week program to teach the youth positive ways to handle their anger. There are three 1 1/2 hour sessions a week, which are held in the dorms and led by two of the dorm Counselors. There are three components: 1) skill streaming (the behavior component), 2) anger control (the emotional component) and 3) moral reasoning (the values component). Skill streaming teaches the youth alternatives to aggression. Anger control teaches the youth alternate solutions to aggressive behavior. Moral reasoning teaches the youth why to use these skills. Skill streaming is taught two nights a week. Anger control is taught two times a week. Moral reasoning is taught on Saturdays.

### **Supplemental Programs**

The MDT meets with the youth when he is first admitted. They also meet with the youth's family. An Individual Service Plan is developed for each resident. The team also develops an Aftercare plan about three weeks before youth is released. The team can meet on other occasions as needed to update or refocus the direction of treatment. Most of the parents do participate.

Youth are encouraged to look for work and put in job applications when they are on furloughs, plus get identification cards or drivers' licenses, which will help them find employment.

### **Community Based Organizations (CBOs)**

The Commissioners met with representatives from three Community Based Organizations. The 3 Principles Division of the Santa Clara County Department of Alcohol and Drug Services manages one of the programs. This CBO has been working with the Probation Department for over 10 years and covers a variety of prevention and education programs for the Juvenile Hall and Ranches. Weekly classes are 60-90 minutes and include between 8–10 sessions over the course of the youth stays at the Juvenile Hall or the Ranches. Average daily attendance is 10-12 youth and classes are held throughout the day. The program addresses the youth values and beliefs and how to change them. It is an open entry/open exit program.

The Commissioners met with a representative from Pathways Society. This CBO provides drug and alcohol counseling. Currently staffing is 1.5 Full Time Employees (FTE) and average caseload is between 10-20 youth. Average program length is between 3-6 months and consists of both group and individual counseling. In addition to youth counseling, the CBO also provides counseling to families of youth at the Ranch. They see court-ordered cases first, and usually there is no time to see other cases. There are 15 youth on the waiting list. There is a need for more counselors, both for Mental Health and for Pathways. The Pathways Counselor defines success as not using drugs and alcohol, and avoiding criminal behavior.

Commissioners met four staff from California Youth Outreach (CYO) at their office. One was the Director and another was a long time CYO employee. The other two staff work at James Ranch. The program is for 10 weeks for one hour. They rotate groups until all of the pods have received the program. One of the staff also provides one-on-one counseling for one or two youth. The staff also responds to gang problems at the Ranch.

CYO uses a cognitive behavior model. They have the youth examine their thinking about what got them placed at a detention facility. The questions they try to have students answer are: 1) How you think? 2) Why do you think and 3) Reflection-What got them into trouble? The staff combines the themes "Thinking for Change" and "Gang Redirect."

When asked what they like about the Ranch program, the staff said they like the Ranch's focus on using the cognitive behavior model based on the Missouri Model. They like this approach because it appeared to work more effectively with youth. They stated fewer youth were returning to the Ranch after serving time. Also, the Ranch's new focus correlated more closely with the approach the staff of CYO used.

An alternative for youth who are released from James Ranch is to go to the recreation program at Alum Rock Youth Center for programs and support.



There were two things that all of the CBO's expressed. One, because of budgetary constraints, they were not able to do as much as they would like. Two, they would like more time with youth.

### **Sports**

The youth at James Ranch are a part of the Central Coast Ranch Athletics League. The four sports that are played are basketball, volleyball, softball and kickball. The goal of this program is to learn how to be a team player and to learn leadership. The program is open to all youth. There is also a weight lifting program available to youth.

### **Religious Programs**

The Correctional Institutions Chaplaincy of Santa Clara County, Inc. (CIC) provides the religious services and counseling to youth. Church services and Bible Studies are held once a week. Protestant services are held every Sunday and Catholic services are held on the first and third Sundays. Individual and group religious guidance Counselors visit youth regularly. If there is a youth of another religion, the CIC Chaplain tries to arrange for the youth's own religious leader to come to see youth. If this not possible, the Chaplain contacts a cleric of the youth's religion from a list of volunteers.

## **VI. BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

A Multi-Disciplinary Team develops an individual treatment plan for each youth. This plan is used to assess the youth's progress through the Ranch program. The youth are treated individually and as a member of their pod. When rules are violated, the youth is counseled immediately, generally without punishment. If the misbehavior continues, the entire pod sits with the youth for group interaction regarding the behavior. If this does not work, then counseling continues with the Probation Counselor Supervisor and the Ranch Manager. Whether the youth progresses or not is based upon his behavior for the whole week, not one incident.

### **Incident Reports**

Commissioners reviewed the 57 Incident Reports for November 2009, December 2009 and January 2010. There were 15 incidents that involved the use of physical and/or mechanical restraints. In five incidents, the youth were counseled. In seven incidents the youth were taken to Juvenile Hall. In four cases, youth were ranch failures. The other three had a possibility of returning to the Ranch. Two were returned to the Ranch and given an additional 30 days.

There were three escapes. One was while on furlough. The other two were absconders from the Aftercare Program.

There were six reports of injuries. One involved a youth who was injured when a weight from a weight machine fell on his head. The nurse at the Ranch initially treated him. His parents were contacted and took him to the doctor. In another incident, the youth cut his lip playing sports and a band-aid was put on the cut. There was one incident of a self-inflicted injury when a youth was barefoot. He was seen by nurse and told to wear shoes. There were two incidents of injury to staff. In one, staff drove to Kaiser for treatment and in the other no medical treatment was required.

There were seven incidents that were identified as Aftercare failures. Two were the escapes. Two were designated offsite Ranch failure/Aftercare. Three were Aftercare violations return to Ranch. Each was returned to the Ranch for an additional 30 days.

The remaining Incident Reports involved a variety of behaviors which resulted in no action and counseling. In one case the youth was referred to Mental Health. Four were returned to Juvenile Hall as Ranch Failures. The Probation Manager has the authority to review the incident and let the youth return to the Ranch after they have been taken to Juvenile Hall.

### **Grievances**

There have been five grievances filed this fiscal year. In one the youth asked for dandruff shampoo and a better body wash because the regular soap caused dry skin. The Probation Manager's resolution was to follow medical recommendations and review again if needed. Medical services encouraged the youth to use a lotion provided. In another grievance the youth said he did not have access to shampoo. Probation Manager followed up. The third grievance was on behalf of a pod. The grievance stated that the pod was concerned regarding the negative behavior of one of the pod members. The resolution was that the situation be monitored and resolved through the cognitive behavior model.

Of the remaining two grievances, one youth had a personal issue that was resolved by the staff. The last grievance had to do with a facilities issue that was being resolved by the Manager.

### **Appeals**

One Appeal has been filed. The youth said he had been failed one week for no specific reason. The Appeal was denied. Probation Manager reviewed the matter with the youth. The youth has behavioral issues that he needs to address.

## VII. MEDICAL SERVICES

Prior to arriving at the Ranch, all youth are given a comprehensive medical examination at Juvenile Hall. A registered nurse is on site at the Ranch seven days a week on a split shift of 7:00 am to 11:00 am and from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm. A doctor visits the Ranch every other week. If a youth needs immediate attention at other times, the nurse's office is equipped with tele-video equipment that gives the medical staff at Juvenile Hall the capability to evaluate a minor's condition and make treatment or transportation decisions. If needed, transportation can be arranged to the Juvenile Hall medical facility or Valley Medical Center Emergency Room (VMC).

A youth's medical record is sent to the Ranch with the youth when he is admitted. The nurse reviews each new record to become familiar with the youth's medical history and medications. While the youth is at the ranch, the nurse updates the record and inputs the information in the online medical record, which can be viewed by the medical staff at Juvenile Hall.

There are 37 youth who are taking medication at the Ranch. The medications are kept in a locked closet in the Medical Services office. The nurse visits the pods twice a day, in the morning and in the evening, to distribute medication and is available to discuss and answer medical questions and complaints. The nurse also provides reproductive health information and condoms to youth who request it and who are going off-site for home visits.

There has been a dramatic increase in almost all medical care categories at the Ranch.

	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
Doctor Appointments	95	258
VMC Emergency Dept. Evaluations	10	9
Sick Call Assessments by Nurse (not including drop-ins)	793	1366
Dental Referrals	4	32
VMC Outpatient Clinic Appointments	49	130

From 2008 to 2009 there was an increase in the population with the addition of the 24 beds. This only partially explains the change. The nurse stated that with the Ranch stays of at least six months the medical staff is now focusing on detailed health maintenance and preventive issues such as allergy (hay fever) evaluations and treatments, eye exams, acne issues, STD screening after (OT) off-site visits, annual physicals, sleep apnea evaluation and congenital disease follow up. The Commission applauds this pro-active approach to health care.

## **VIII. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

The Santa Clara Valley Health and Hospital Systems (SCVHHS) provided mental health services at the Ranch through the middle of 2009. Since that time, the County contracted with Starlight Community Services to provide mental health care. Currently there is one full-time Mental Health Specialist II at the Ranch who works Sunday through Thursday from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm and occasionally stays later in the evenings to accommodate meetings with family members. His duties include reviewing the mental health assessments and medical files of new youth at the Ranch, and responding to referrals from the nurse and/or Probation Counselors. He meets individually with 16 youth on a regular basis, and also works with 10 families of youth, supporting the reunification process by addressing concerns related to youth returning home and improving inter-familial communication. The Commissioners spoke with family members at the Sunday visitation who expressed appreciation that the mental health staff person spoke Spanish. A psychiatrist visits the Ranch on the first and third Thursdays of the month. There are eight youth who take psychotropic medication for mental health conditions.

The mental health staff person attends the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings at which plans are created to successfully transition youth from Juvenile Hall to the Ranch and from the Ranch program to Aftercare. The staff person meets less formally with the psychiatrist when he visits, with Pathways staff who do substance abuse counseling, and with Ranch Counselors, as needed to address the needs of the Ranch population.

This year the Commission has been inquiring into the progress made on the mental health recommendations of the Huskey Report (October 2008), which included suggested mental health service levels at the Ranches. The Starlight staff was unfamiliar with the report, but noted after a brief review that the recommended coverage could not be provided with only one staff person.

## **IX. EDUCATION**

Commissioners met with the School Principal and teaching staff at the Ranch. The education program at the James Ranch is managed by Blue Ridge High School, one of the 16 alternative Schools Department programs of the Santa Clara County Office of Education (COE) and is designed to allow students to return to their home schools upon return to the community. The school serves an average of 55-60 students in grades 10 through 12. Youth are required to spend 300 minutes per day in the education program, which includes language arts, social studies, math, science, vocational education, GED preparation and special education services.

There are four (ISP) Alternative School teachers, one Special Day Class (SDC) teacher and one Resource Specialist. All teachers are credentialed. One concern of the Commission is how ELLs receive educational support. Three teachers speak Spanish. When asked about additional support for these students, the teachers said they use several ESL (English as a Second Language) techniques. They also work on building the

students' English vocabulary by having vocabulary building activities, word walls, visuals and other strategies. Also, when the class is reading a selection, after every few paragraphs, either the teacher or a volunteer will summarize what has just been read.

Support staff consists of a shared principal, school office coordinator and shared counselor and shared custodian. A social services volunteer provide mentoring services to youth and their parents. The School Principal allocates appropriately 20% of his total time to the James Ranch with the rest of his time allocated to three other COE facilities.

The bilingual staff receives regular staff development training. However, the teaching staff felt that there needed to be a program of regular staff development in order to keep them up on current teaching techniques.

Upon enrollment, the Measurement of Academic Proficiency (MAP) test, an academic measurement tool administered to youth to identify their language arts and math skills, and the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) is used to determine their English skills. An Individual Success Plan (ISP) formerly called the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is also developed for each of the youth. Input from parents, counselors and Probation Officers is used to develop the plan, which then allows teachers and students to focus on goals aimed at helping youth to transition back into the community. The plan is updated every 90 days.

With the addition of 24 youth at James Ranch through the expanded ERP, the school increased the number of classrooms to five, however, fiscal restraints only allowed the school to increase the staff by one teacher thereby unable to match total numbers of pods to the number of classrooms. Current classroom instruction has four teachers in the morning classes with a teacher/student ratio of 1 to 14/15, as compared to the afternoon classes, which have four regular and one SDC teacher with a teacher/student ratio of 1/12.

A review of the math and language performance statistics of youth while at Juvenile Hall and at the Ranches shows that the English Language Arts (ELA) and math scores for youth to be 4 years below average scores for grades 10-12. The teachers' goals for all students are for them to achieve grade level status in language arts, reading and math. In math, the teachers individualize so they can help students at their own skill levels. The teachers also have group lessons two to three times a week. The teachers made several recommendations, including that students should get more one-on-one tutoring because this service really helps them a lot, and that students receive more mental health services.

Commissioners visited several classrooms during the English period. In one class, students were taking a test on a novel about Indians. In another, the teacher reviewed current affairs and the weather before working with them on a novel. Commissioners visited a class where art was offered.

There were various levels of student involvement in the lesson. In one class, students were highly engaged while they appeared to be inattentive in another. One

recommendation would be for staff to collaborate on finding and preparing reading material that would engage youth so they would be more interested in participating in classroom activities.

## **X. FEEDBACK FROM YOUTH AND PARENTS**

Several Commissioners visited James Ranch on February 21, 2010 while the families were visiting the youth. We spoke to the youth and their families. For the most part the comments were positive. Several youth said they would like to take more school classes.

The parents with whom the Commissioners spoke said that they had no complaints about the Ranch program and several thought that the program was good. One mother said that the Ranch was much better than Juvenile Hall and that her son got along better with his Counselor at the Ranch than with the staff at Juvenile Hall.

One father stated that when he learned that his son was going to the Ranch, he had talked to other parents, and his son talked to youth at Juvenile Hall and both had been given a very negative impression about life at the Ranch. He said that all changed when his son came to the Ranch. Having participated in the MDT, the father said he now had a better understanding of the program. The father suggested that more be done to inform parents earlier about the Enhanced Ranch Program.

## **XI. RESPONSE TO 2009 RECOMMENDATIONS**

There were eight Recommendations. A written response was received from Chief Probation Officer Sheila Mitchell on July 16, 2009. Five have been completed. Three require additional funding that has yet to be provided.

## **XII. DOCUMENTS REVIEWED**

1. 2009 Annual Fire and Life Safety Inspection for the William F. James Boys' Ranch, dated November 13, 2009
2. An Assessment of the Enhanced Ranch Program, Santa Clara County Probation Department by The National Council on Crime and Delinquency, dated July 24, 2009
3. A letter from Chief Probation Officer, Sheila Mitchell Re: Response to the Juvenile Justice Commission Inspection Report-William F. James Boys' Ranch, dated July 16, 2009
4. James Ranch Staff Organization Chart

5. James Ranch: Jan-10 Population Breakdown by Ethnicity and Age
6. James Ranch Program Schedule, Week of Monday January 4, 2010 thru March 12, 2010; 10 week program
7. James Ranch Weekday Schedule
8. The Journal of Juvenile Court, Community, and Alternative School Administrators of California, Spring 2007, Volume 2007
9. Center for Sustainable Change, Prevention, Intervention and Treatment, Based on the 3 Principles of Mind, Thought & Consciousness
10. Copy of email sent to JPD JR, Hector Sanchez, Wendy Wedl, cc to Kathy Duque, Subject Aftercare Night/Group Meetings by Christopher Yieh, dated December 01, 2009
11. Annual Health Inspection-William James Boys' Ranch-2009, dated March 25, 2009
12. William F. James Boys' Ranch Programs, Revised as of 1-7-10 James Ranch & Muriel Wright Center, 6-8 Month Program
13. County Board of Supervisors Agenda, Accept report from Public Safety and Justice Committee of August 6, 2009 regarding the Enterprises Program, dated August 25, 2010
14. Muriel Wright Residential Center & William F. James Boys' Ranch Programs
15. The County of Santa Clara Probation Department, James Ranch and Muriel Wright Residential Center, Enhanced Ranch Program, dated February 20, 2008
16. 2008-2009 Annual Report for Blue Ridge High School, dated December 1, 2009
17. William F. James Ranch Brochure, revised November 2009
18. California Youth Outreach Brochure
19. Juvenile Justice Commission, Inspection Report, January 2009

### ***XIII. COMMENDATIONS***

#### **The Juvenile Justice Commission commends:**

1. The James Ranch staff for the care and concerns they have for the youth at the Ranch. Virtually all of the staff the Commissioners interacted with were very positive in their approach to the youth.
2. The Santa Clara County Probation Department for adding a second Aftercare Counselor.
3. The Santa Clara County Probation Department for implementing new concepts to the Aftercare Program, Aftercare Night/Group Meetings and the Apprenticeship Work-Study Program.
4. The SCCVHS for their expanded health care to the minors.
5. The County Office of Education for the thorough Annual report that they did in 2008-2009.

### **XIV. RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **The Juvenile Justice Commission recommends that the Santa Clara County Probation Department:**

1. Offer the Ranch Orientation to parents as early as possible to belie any misinformation parents receive.
2. Pursue the implementation of the Culinary Arts Program.
3. Continue to look for methods to improve the Aftercare Program to ensure a successful transition from the Ranch to the community.
4. Explore ways to increase the counseling youth receive regarding gang involvement and substance abuse.
5. Develop a data system on Aftercare Program success and failures.
6. Meet the Mental Health services levels recommended in the Huskey report.

#### **The Juvenile Justice Commission recommends that the County Office of Education:**

1. Send teaching staff to regular staff development in order for staff to keep up with current teaching techniques



2. Provide more tutors to give one-on-one tutoring to youth.
3. Develop reading materials that would engage students so they would participate in classroom.

**XV. SUMMARY**

The Juvenile Justice Commission has completed its annual inspection of the James Boys' Ranch.

Based on this inspection, the Santa Clara County Juvenile Justice Commission believes that the James Boys' Ranch exceeds the requirements for assuring the safety, well being and rehabilitation of youth in a juvenile detention facility.

**Approved by the Santa Clara County Juvenile Justice Commission on**

\_\_\_\_\_, 2010.

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Pamela N. Serrano, JJC Chair

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Date

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Patricia A. Khan, Inspection Committee Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date