

County of Santa Clara

Probation Department

Juvenile Hall
840 Guadalupe Parkway
San Jose, California 95110

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840 Guadalupe Parkway
San Jose, California 95110



Laura Garnette
Chief Probation Officer

December 6, 2016

Raul Colunga
Juvenile Justice Commission
840 Guadalupe Parkway
San Jose, CA 95110

Re: Response to the 2016 Juvenile Justice Commission Inspection Report on the William F. James Ranch

Dear Chairperson Raul Colunga,

The following is a response to the Juvenile Justice Commission Inspection Report and Recommendations prepared September 2016 on the Santa Clara County William F. James Ranch facility.

The responses below are enumerated in a manner that is consistent with the inspection report.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Santa Clara County Office of Education (COE):

1. Assign a computer education teacher to the Ranch Blue Ridge education team, as recommended previously. (Section IV. EDUCATION - *Technology, Vocational, and Online Learning*)

Response: At this time, there are no plans to assign a computer education teacher to Blue Ridge High School. Due to decreasing enrollment and the Tiny House project, all focus and funding have been channeled towards maintaining the Welding and Construction strands. In an effort to continue to provide high school graduates at Blue Ridge continued learning while increasing their use and exposure to computers, a program developed around career exploration and certificate awards has been in practice since July of 2016. Students participate online to receive certifications in Food Handler Safety, Blue Print Reading for Welding, OSHA Safety, DMV and other interests.

2. Invest in the Ranch education program, involving the teachers in examining and implementing evidence-based, best practice programs for this population. (Section IV. EDUCATION - *Academic Performance Goals*)

Response: All Blue Ridge High School teachers have received training in “Trauma Informed Instruction.” The 2016/17 school year will continue with providing deeper professional development in Trauma Informed Instruction and content areas of instruction. Blue Ridge High School teachers have a full release day of content specific professional development every six weeks. All teachers participate in two monthly half day content specific developments and collaborations led by experts in the field of differentiated instruction, a recognized practice for this population.

3. Accelerate the plan to offer certificated Career Technical Education (CTE) courses to Blue Ridge students. (Section IV. EDUCATION - *Technology, Vocational, and Online Learning*)

Response: The Certification Program at Blue Ridge is a pilot program offered to students in the “C” Pod. The program focuses on career exploration as the C Pod is comprised primarily of high school graduates. The program is designed to provide the high school graduates with opportunities to attain certificated knowledge in job areas. Certificates awarded include Food Handler Safety, and OSHA Safety. Currently, Blue Ridge is planning to align the construction program to Career Technical Education (CTE) construction standards to offer certification, level 1. Welding is also offered to all students; those students can obtain a Welding level 1 and 2 certificate when meeting requirements.

4. Provide basic keyboarding instruction. (Section: IV. EDUCATION - *Education Framework*)

Response: Students do not have access to a dedicated computer teacher. Some students during the summer months participate in computer application classes that are offered as intersessions. Qualified teaching staff is limited, therefore, access is not always guaranteed and can only be offered in the summer at Blue Ridge High School.

Probation Department:

5. Expedite the generation of data reports to determine the overall effectiveness of the Ranch Programs and make these reports accessible to all management level staff, in order to support program improvements and guide decision making. (Section: V. PROGRAMS - *Evaluation Data*)

Response: The Department agrees with the Commission’s recommendation to develop internal data reports, which are readily accessible, to assess the overall effectiveness of the James Ranch program. Over the past several months, the Institutions Division has been actively working with our Information Technology Division and new Director of Research and Evaluation to complete the development of the reporting system. The

Department is targeting January 2017 for completion of this project, followed by quality assurance testing. The new reporting system is anticipated to go live in March of 2017.

6. Repair the noted leaky building roofs before the rainy season. (Section: IX. FACILITY - *Maintenance*)

Response: In August 2016, the roof of the building housing Classroom 1 and 2 was found to be defective and in need of replacement. County Facilities & Fleet initiated a project to re-roof the building while at the same time, updating the interior. The work on this project began in August, but several delays have occurred preventing it from being completed at this time. First, the main internet hub for the entire James Ranch campus is located in this building. Probation, County Office of Education, and County Information System staff met with County Facilities & Fleet to determine if the hub could be moved or if it would need to stay where it is located, meaning the roofing construction would need to work around the hub. It was determined that the roof construction would need to work around the hub. The second major delay occurred when it was found that the Exterior Skeletal Support Beams holding up the roof structure appeared to be rotting where they connected to concrete footings around the exterior of the building. County Facilities & Fleet had an engineering report completed to determine if the support beams were adequately anchored. It was found that the footings needed to be repaired and this will be completed as part of the overall project. Currently, with the weather changing, the actual roofing will likely occur in February 2017 and completed by March 2017.

7. Improve perimeter security and video surveillance at the gates, as previously recommended. (Section: XII. *SAFETY AND SANITATION*)

Response: In March of 2016, the Department contracted with AVS Engineers to complete a comprehensive site assessment resulting in recommendations to enhance the overall security of the James Ranch. The assessment included an analysis of the current gates, lighting and video surveillance at Malaguerra Road and both the sally port gate (main entrance) and back gate. The assessment was completed by AVS Engineers in May of 2016. The assessment looks at how to get the necessary level of security in place without duplicating efforts due to the pending James Ranch construction project (Senate Bill 81). The recommendations disclose approximately \$800,000 worth of initial security improvements that appear to be critical and can be done while the James Ranch construction project is in progress. A Capital Project funding request has been submitted to the Office of the County Executive to obtain the necessary funding for this project in the upcoming fiscal year.

Social Services Agency and Health and Hospitals System:

8. Authorize inclusion of Juvenile Behavioral Health in the HealthLink medical records system. (Section: VII. MEDICAL SERVICES - *Medical Records Management*)

Response: The Health and Hospitals System connected Custody Health with the HealthLink electronic medical record system in both the Juvenile Hall and James Ranch on November 7, 2016. At this time, Behavioral Health is already in the development stages and planning to go to the Healthlink electronic medical record system in the Fall of 2017.

Pathway Society (CBO):

9. Hire a qualified full time counselor. (Section: VIII. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES – *Pathway Society*)

Response: The third counselor for Pathway Society has been hired. Currently, Pathway Society has three full-time counselors assign to the Ranch, who are supervised by their Director of Clinical Standards, a licensed MFT. Two counselors are Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselors (CADCI), and the third counselor is a certified drug counselor (CCAPPP), certified by California Consortium of Addiction Programs and Professionals. Language capability for the staff include fluency in Vietnamese, Chinese and Spanish. Each counselor carries a caseload of 17 to 28 youth who are either residing at the Ranch or participating in Wraparound Services.

The Juvenile Justice Commission members' dedication to safe, sound and healthy conditions for our youth at the James Ranch is appreciated and viewed as invaluable by the Probation Department. Your comprehensive report reflects the significant effort and time committed to reviewing the policies and practices of the James Ranch. Thank you very much for your time, commitment and insights.

Sincerely,



Laura Garnette
Chief Probation Officer

cc: Jeff Smith, County Executive
Martha Wapenski, Deputy County Executive
Honorable Katherine Lucero, Presiding Judge
Cheryl Stevens, County Counsel
Jermaine Hardy, Deputy Chief Probation Officer
Nick Birchard, Deputy Chief Probation Officer