

TO: Stephen Betts, Secretary, Juvenile Justice Commission, Santa Clara County

FROM: Dr. Mary Ann Dewan, County Superintendent of Schools

DATE: December 11, 2020

SUBJECT: William F. James Ranch Inspection Report September 2020

This report has identified four areas for the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) to respond to. The goal of all Juvenile Justice stakeholders is to move youth from being Justice involved to being educationally prepared to become productive members of our county and communities. Below are the responses from the SCCOE to the findings in the Inspection Report for our Ranch program.

**That Santa Clara County Office of Education (COE) provide online education that provides live video teacher to student instruction.**

The Santa Clara County Office of Education and the Technology Services Branch (TSB) have been instrumental in supporting the integration of classroom virtual instruction systems. Legacy classrooms have a dedicated system which is comprised of a high-definition camera, speaker, large monitor and computer for use with the virtual meeting platform, Zoom. Classrooms in the new campus wing were equipped with an updated projection unit and interactive white boards. The upgrade to these systems included the high-definition cameras, speakers, and dedicated computer for use with Zoom. Teaching staff at Blue Ridge received training on how to set-up recurring zoom meetings and bring the system online remotely. Ongoing small group and one-on-one training includes best practices for engaging students remotely, peer coaching and monthly professional development designed to sustain a high-quality blended learning environment through in-person and virtual learning.

As of November 3, 2020, Blue Ridge had a total of nine teachers. Five teachers are teaching in-person each week with four in-person two days per week and one in-person five days per week. Three teachers are teaching five days per week virtually via Zoom. Our culinary arts instructor is working with students via online instruction while preparations are underway to set-up his instructional area in the Legacy dining area. This is scheduled to be completed at the beginning of December. He will be our final instructor teaching via Zoom. The Blue Ridge College Liaison is communicating and working with students via email and the learning management system. A virtual teaching system will be available for use by the end of November.

**That COE provide consistency in the programs used to monitor student education levels.**

The Student Services and Support Division and the Alternative Education Department made the decision to change the math and reading assessment from Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) to Renaissance STAR Assessments in January of 2020.

The Alternative Education department had been using NWEA testing for reading and math assessment on or around the 2014-15 school year. The reason for the implementation of NWEA

at this time was a desire to align the student scores with Oddesseyware and to align instruction with NWEA student Rasch Unit Scale (RIT) scores. This process was never fully implemented, and Probation officers and judges found the score reports difficult to understand (RIT score does not easily transfer).

The Alternative Education team made the decision to change back to Renaissance STAR testing during the 2019-20 school year for the following reasons:

1. Score reports for Renaissance STAR provide instant reporting regarding grade equivalency, percentile rank, and instructional reading level and these scores are more understandable to Probation and juvenile justice partners regarding student level and progress. Renaissance STAR also provides a Student Growth Profile score after two data points which is understandable for partners.
2. Ren STAR reports are readily available on the Ren STAR system and can be disaggregated by student, group, site, and district.
3. In contrast, NWEA provides a RIT score which is confusing to people not familiar with the NWEA system and requires a two -step process with comparison charts to translate to a grade level equivalency or instructional reading level.
4. Renaissance STAR directly aligns with Edgenuity, the new student learning platform for Alternative Education so staff have access to student reading and math levels as they assign courses.
5. Renaissance STAR provides opportunity for students to use MY ON, an online library of novels and reading materials aligned to student's Ren STAR reading scores. Teachers can create lesson plans aligned to the novels through the system.
6. Renaissance STAR directly aligns with Accelerated Reader and MY ON to promote student reading and literacy.
7. Renaissance STAR directly aligns to Data Zone and is used by Alternative Education, so the transition provides opportunity for consistency in district systems.
8. Renaissance STAR reports enable teachers to determine skill needs of students in reading and math.

### **That COE restores full Special Education Services to JR students.**

Since our shelter-in-place orders in March 2020 students with disabilities have been continuously monitored by their Resource Specialist Program (RSP) case manager as well as their specialized academic instructor and education para professionals. The RSP case manager's role since March has been to hold annual Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings and amendment meetings, ensure parents/guardians are in receipt of annual parental rights, and collaborate with specialized academic instructors to review current IEP goals, services, as well as accommodations and modifications. Alternative Education has one RSP case manager assigned to each school. Additionally, specialized academic instruction teachers have continued to accommodate and modify content in a student's identified area of need per their IEP. The specialized academic instruction teachers are also responsible for monitoring IEP goal progression. This process has continued throughout the duration of distance learning.

Individualized Education Plan mental health services continue to be provided by Probation's mental health counselors. Speech services were impacted between mid-March to mid-September. However, beginning mid-September speech services have resumed at Blue Ridge.

**That COE restore post high school college opportunities to JR students and vocational education programs to JR students.**

Alternative Education post high school opportunities have continued from mid-March through the current academic semester. The current semester, which began August 20, 2020, includes seventeen students enrolled in our internet Career Education Video (iCEV) courses. In the current semester we have had six students complete and receive iCEV certificates with an additional seven students being released early due to COVID. Three students are currently in-progress of attaining their certificates, and one student was moved to another facility. During the fall 2020 semester our Blue Ridge college liaison supported fourteen students in achieving their food handlers' certifications. Additionally, twenty-four certifications in a number of iCEV areas were also awarded in the fall of 2020. Our college liaison has continued to engage students this semester in iCEV Career Pathways and Financial Literacy courses. Students are also enrolled in our on-site CTE Introduction to Commercial and Residential Construction and Culinary Arts courses. Current efforts include working with students to pre-enroll them for spring community college courses. Planned for spring semester of 2021, and in collaboration with the LIUNA training center, Blue Ridge will host a 12-week training program offering Journey-level classes. .