

# Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission

## San Mateo County, California

### Canyon Oaks, School Year 2019-2020 (May, 2019- August, 2020)

#### Canyon Oaks School Inspection Report

Date of this Inspection: August 27, 2020

Date of Last Inspection: May 20, 2019

Facility Name: Canyon Oaks

Contact Person: Sibane Parcels, Principal

Address: 400 Edmonds Rd, Redwood City,  
94062

Phone Number: (650) 312-5323

#### School (Section 1370)

#### Executive Summary

#### Background

The school at the Canyon Oaks Youth Center educates youth with severe emotional challenges who are in the residential treatment facility. The facility is operated by BHRS. The San Mateo County Office of Education provides education. All students have IEPs. Normally, education occurs in a classroom with students on A and B schedules. Due to Covid-19, teachers are remote. At this time, all students learn together online from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.

SMCOE has expanded educational services this year. Previously, two teachers and one paraeducator provided all subject-area instruction, credit-recovery supervision, IEP services and compliance, and student work-experience. Currently, there is one full-time teacher who teaches Math, Science, and Social Studies, and leads IEPs with the assistance of an administrative coordinator. There is one full time paraeducator. There are three part time teachers who teach English, Physical Education, and Credit Recovery. Finally, the school academic counselor who serves Hillcrest and Camp Kemp now provides academic and vocational counseling to Canyon Oaks students. These services are the result of SMCOE's and the principal's robust commitment to the Canyon Oaks school and its students.

Note: The inspection team chose to do the inspection remotely because of health concerns. This inspection is based on interviews with the SMCOE, the principal, and the lead teacher via Zoom. No students were interviewed.

#### School Summary and Comments

The teachers and paraeducator have created a school that serves its students in a therapeutically appropriate way. They do so through: 1. strong collaboration with each other and with therapeutic staff, 2. skill in working with special needs students, and 3. sensitivity and caring. Instruction is a combination of computer-based learning, individual instruction, and group teaching. While this is typically done in-person, all instruction is currently online due to Covid-19.

Because approximately 85% of students are below grade level upon arrival, teachers often focus on basic skills acquisition and proficiency. The curriculum adheres to California's Common Core State Standards at grade-level. The Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) test is given every 3-months to track student progress. The school plans to use this data to understand the progress students make in

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aggregate and to better target the needs of individual students. The SMCOE plans to provide teachers with professional development in how to use test results to set learning goals and target the curricular needs of students.

**Commendations**

The school satisfies all inspection areas.

SMCOE and the principal show a strong commitment to best serving these students. This year's reorganization and staffing additions have allowed them to provide for more student services and limit teacher burn-out. Of note is the reorganization of teaching responsibilities and the addition of three new staff to support Credit Recovery, provide counseling, and manage IEPs.

It has adapted well to the off-site teaching demands of Covid-19.

The teaching staff feels well-supported by a responsive, present principal.

**Recommendations**

We have no recommendations. The school provides an excellent education and educational environment to its high-need students.

**Notes for Next Year's Inspection**

Ensure that partial credits are being captured when a student returns to his or her home school so that students do not have to repeat courses.

Look at SMCOE's MAP testing analysis to evaluate student skill advancement while at Canyon Oaks Youth Center.

Do in-person inspection.

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**Inspection Notes:**

**Number of Full-Time Instructors:** 1 credentialed teacher with subject area and Special Education certifications

**Number of Part-Time Instructors:** 3 - English (.25 assignment) 1 hour daily, Physical Education (.25 assignment) 1 hour daily, and Credit Recovery (.25 assignment) 1/week.

**Number of Full-Time Instructional Aides:** 1

**Number of Tutors (Paid? Volunteer?):** 0

**Frequency of Substitute Teachers:** Rare

**Number of youth attending School:** Currently, there are 9 students.

**Average Classroom Size:** 6

**Max Classroom Size:** 6

**Number of youth on independent study:** 0

**Reason:** There isn't an independent study program; students have individualized instruction built into their school day.

**Number of youth not attending school:** Previous to Covid-19, most students attended school most days, however attendance for a full day of school was approximately 50%. The lead teacher notes that with the Covid-19 enforced distance learning, the percentage of students attending school is higher. Students attend school via Chromebook. They may attend from their rooms (in some cases) or from the living and dining rooms, and may attend with their faces on- or off-screen. The school start time is a half hour later. The changed educational approach may better accommodate students' varying emotional and physical availability. We do not imply that distance-learning is a better educational approach than in-person instruction.

**Reason:** Students are not forced to attend school. These students are in intense therapeutic care. They may be changing medications, need additional sleep, or have great anxiety or other psychiatric symptoms that would make attending school on a given day difficult. Sometimes a student will have therapy during class-time.

**Describe the general atmosphere of the classrooms:** Due to Covid-19, students are not in classrooms. They are in common areas or their rooms as deemed appropriate by therapeutic staff.

In the past, they have been clean and well-organized. We understand that with the added outdoor storage shed (a recommendation from last-year's inspection), the small classrooms are more spacious.

**Adequate Supplies, Books, Paper, Computer?**  Acceptable  Unacceptable

**Are youth given access to computers/internet?**  Yes  No  
Details (when, purpose, supervision):

The school typically uses a blended-learning approach and students often use classroom computers as part of their education. Due to Covid-19, all instruction is currently online with individual Chromebooks

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connected to the internet. Security is provided by the program "Go Guardian". Students use computers during the school day in the common rooms under the supervision of therapeutic staff or in their rooms.

While credit recovery may be done by pencil and paper, 90% use the Edgenuity individualized learning platform for Credit Recovery.

**Describe the relationship between school and facility staff:** There is close collaboration. Typically, 1. teachers and therapeutic staff have bi-weekly meetings to discuss each student, 2. therapeutic staff participate in IEP meetings and support compliance, 3. therapeutic staff are accessible outside of the classroom to manage emotional issues that present themselves in the classroom, and 4. teaching staff read therapeutic logs before class each day to understand the recent history of their students. During Covid-19, the teachers check in with therapeutic staff every morning about each student so that they can adjust their classroom work per the student's emotional needs that day. While students are online for class, therapeutic staff is available to support the students.

**Describe access to school, recreation, etc. for youth confined to their rooms:** Canyon Oaks is a residential treatment facility rather than a locked facility. Youth are not confined to their rooms. They always have access to school, recreation and counseling during the day as scheduled.

**When is school held on the unit instead of in the classroom?** Not applicable.

**Post High School/GED:**

**Are there educational opportunities available for youth who have completed high school or have their GED?**  Yes  No

Describe: Vocational Training: Students may participate in the "Workability" program which provides job skills training and internships with coaching. Youth who are still in high school and who participate in this program can get high school credit for participating. Examples of internships are working in the Redwood City Library or in the garden at the San Mateo County Office of Education's Gateway School. Vocational Education is also provided by the occupational therapist who is on staff at Canyon Oaks.

**College Education:** The therapeutic staff facilitates a student's enrollment and registration, transportation, and provides educational support. This year, two students began the college process with the support of the therapeutic staff, but both decided not to continue.

**Are youth given info/counseling on community college & 4-year college options?**  Yes  No

Describe: The school academic counselor leads the Bridges to College program and California Career Zone once each week (during Science class) and also meets with students individually once each month. All students learn about career pathways, educational requirements for careers, and receive help filling out college applications.

**Are youth given information/counseling about financial aid options for college?**  Yes  No

Describe: The school academic counselor offers this information and helps fill out financial aid applications.

**Are youth given resources for college entrance exam prep when appropriate?**  Yes  No

Describe: Materials to study for college entrance exams are available to students by special request.

**Are youth able to take courses for college credit online?**  Yes  No

Describe: Students have computer access for college courses.

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**Special Education/IEP Programs:**

**How many youth in the facility have an Individualized Education Program (IEP)?** All students at Canyon Oaks have an IEP. There are currently 9 students at Canyon Oaks.

**Do credentialed special education teachers participate in lesson planning and curriculum development?**  Yes  No

**How many credentialed special education teachers are at the facility full-time?** The one full-time teacher is credentialed in Special Education.

**Are regular IEP meetings held?**  Yes  No

Describe: There are four IEP meetings held per youth: within 30 days after admission, at the annual marker, at the triennial with retesting as needed, and the final is held as part of the youth's transition to his or her next school. The county also follows-up with all IEP students 1-year post graduation if they graduated from a SMCOE school. Therapeutic staff (and probation staff if the student is also under the supervision of a probation officer) are part of the IEP meetings.

**Are parents notified of these meetings?**  Yes  No

Describe: The appropriate holder of the student's educational rights attends. Parents are notified if they have these rights.

**Are parents permitted to attend these meetings?**  Yes  No

Describe: If they have educational rights.

**Describe the most common obstacle to IEP compliance:** One of the most common obstacles to IEP compliance is when students arrive with their IEP meeting in arrears. Additionally, emergency placements at Canyon Oaks make compliance difficult because the records in the Special Education Information System (SEIS) may not be complete when the initial IEP meeting must be, and is, held.

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**Attachment 1: School Supplement**

**How many minutes of instruction per week do students receive?** Instructional minutes are per Educational Code (240 minutes per day). Actual minutes vary by student based on their attendance. The school schedule provides ½-hour for P.E., 1-hour for Science/Math, 1-hour for English, and 40 minutes for Social Science daily. Therapeutic time is also a for-credit “class” that results in Life Skills elective units.

**Do students attend school within three (3) days of placement? Does the school create a preliminary education plan for each new student before the student attends school or once the student has started?**

Yes, the students attend within 3 three days if the student is emotionally ready to do so. Although sometimes there is a delay in receiving IEP information, students have an educational plan upon arrival.

**Are there difficulties obtaining transcripts from the student’s prior school? Are these typically received before or after the student has started attending school?**

The education plan is created in anticipation of the student’s arrival unless the student is an emergency placement or if there is a delay in receiving school records. Transcripts are typically received in advance.

**How are limited English-speaking students identified and served? How are these services provided once the student has been identified as non-English proficient?**

There are no non-English-speaking youth at the school because a youth must speak English to benefit from the therapeutic services. At times, there are limited English speakers. The ELD-certified English teacher meets the needs of these students.

**Is credit recovery offered? Please describe.** Yes, credit recovery is offered via the computer application Edgenuity or can be accomplished through individually created pen-and-paper packets. There is a dedicated Credit Recovery teacher to work with and supervise student progress.

**Is homework assigned? When and where do students do homework?**

Canyon Oaks does not assign homework. The after-school program is therapeutically demanding and the school does not add schoolwork onto the students’ schedules.

**How is transition back to a student’s home district handled?**

Because all students have IEPs, Canyon Oaks initiates an IEP planning meeting with the receiving school before a student returns. This year, SMCOE brought in at 10% time the District Coordinator for Inclusive Services to assist in IEP processes.

**Signature of Commissioner(s) preparing this report**

Melissa Wilson

Date:

Susan Swope

Date: