

LOS ANGELES COUNTY PROBATION OVERSIGHT COMMISSION

2022 Facility Inspection Reports

Camp Paige
Camp Afflerbaugh
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Background

This year (2022) marks the second full year in which the Los Angeles County Probation Oversight Commission (POC) completes facility inspections. In 2021, the POC completed facility inspections in eight juvenile facilities, two juvenile detention centers (“juvenile halls”), and six juvenile camps, including the Dorothy Kirby Center (DKC) ([2021 Facility Inspections Report](#)). As per the authority to inspect under Title 15 of the California Code of Regulations and as part of standard operating procedure, the POC will complete another inspection cycle this year of all eight juvenile facilities currently operating in Los Angeles County. For the 2022 inspections cycle, as recommended by the Board of Supervisors (BOS), the POC will communicate findings to the Probation Department with increased frequency, following each inspection, in addition to the delivery of the annual report and that the Probation Department respond to the inspection reports in writing. Thus, to fully engage the Probation Department and key stakeholders, this procedure continues to be followed; thereby offering findings and eliciting answers to the questions posed by the Commission following the inspections of Camps Paige, Afflerbaugh and Rockey in this report.

From the start of the 2022 inspection cycle, the POC conducted two Facility *Pre-Inspections* at Central Juvenile Hall (CJH) and Campus Kilpatrick ([2022 Pre-Inspections Report](#)), which were prompted by extenuating factors related to the temporary closure of CJH and subsequent merging of the two (2) juvenile halls in March 2022 and the plan to move the former “Department of Juvenile Justice” (DJJ) population (hereafter “SYTF” – youth designated to Secure Treatment Facilities) to a permanent secure facility. Then, inspections at the Dorothy Kirby Center (DKC) and Camp Scott, both co-located in Commerce, California, were completed in June; shared observations appear in [this report](#). The camps in the Eastern part of the County, Camps Paige, Afflerbaugh and Rockey, were conducted in October 2022.

Methods

Each official POC inspection is conducted by at least one Commissioner who utilizes direct observations as their primary method of reporting as well as relies upon interviews with youth and staff assigned to the respective facilities.

The inspections of Camps Paige, Afflerbaugh, and Rockey were conducted on different days by different POC Commissioners. Although Camps Paige and Afflerbaugh are co-located in La Verne, California, the POC conducted two separate inspections. Two POC Commissioners inspected Camp Paige and one POC Commissioner inspected Camp Afflerbaugh. Two Commissioners traveled to San Dimas, California to inspect Camp Rockey. POC staff members provided support during each inspection.

With ample notification, the inspection of these three Camps were coordinated with Probation leadership and leaders at each facility. Further, the template for the inspection was shared with Probation along with email correspondence indicating information, expectations, and suggestions for preparing for each inspection. It should be noted that the data is a “snapshot” captured for the day of the inspection. Additionally, the facility’s demographic data, such as the “facility’s rated capacity,” “population” and “staffing” was provided to the POC staff directly by the facility’s Director, Administrative Director or Supervising Deputy Probation Officer (SDPO); each of these numbers was directly reported in this report. The partner agency data was received from Department of Mental Health (DMH) and Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS) managers or leads.

Findings

The information in each table depicts data gathered directly from each camp facility. The narrative portions following each table include youth and staff accounts derived from face-to-face interviews with POC Commissioners.

For the sake of this report, we will refer to Commissioners who inspected Camp Paige as “Commissioner A” and “Commissioner B” and will refer to the Commissioner who inspected Camp Afflerbaugh as “Commissioner C.” The Commissioners who inspected Camp Rockey will be referred to as “Commissioner D” and “Commissioner E”.

Camp Paige

Youth Population (Physical)*	Number of Youth at Court	Facility’s Rated Capacity	Total Staff (Payroll)	Total Peace Officers	Staff to Youth Ratio (Day)	Staff to Youth Ratio (Night)	Attempted Suicides	Escapes and documented attempts
16	0	120	65	56	2:1	2:1	0	0

Total Credentialed Teachers (LACOE)	Number of Students	Number of Graduates
Unverified	13	3

*1 youth in LA County Jail and 1 youth at CJH for dentistry appointment

Access to Medical and Mental Health Services

Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS)	Services Offered: 7 days / week	Coverage: 6:30 AM – 10:00 PM (RN’s work 8-hour shifts) plus 24-hour access to on-call physician
Department of Mental Health (DMH)	Services Offered: 7 days / week	Coverage: 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM (Staff Shifts: 10-hour days, Sun – Wed or Wed – Sat.) plus 24-hour access to on-call DMH psychiatrist

Inspection Report #1

Upon arrival at Camp Paige, **Commissioner A** was alerted that there was a possibility that the camp might be placed under quarantine because of a positive COVID-19 test by a member of Probation’s staff. Commissioner A entered the facility taking precautions and proceeded to carry out a limited physical inspection and interviewed probation staff and youth under supervision. Commissioner A noted the existing population as reported by the Probation staff was 20, with one youth at Central Juvenile Hall for a dental procedure. Commissioner A performed a cursory inspection of the physical plant and focused on interviews with youth and staff.

According to Commissioner A, there is not a designated court holding area for youth at Camp Paige. However, youth who have court dates are transported the night before in orange clothes to holding areas at the courthouse and must remain in those outfits while at court. Other court hearings are held by Webex with the youth in conference room or another room on an ad hoc basis. Commissioner A also noted that orientation is held initially by probation staff only and then a second orientation is conducted as part of the first Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meeting up to ten days later. At the first orientation, youth are given a packet, the packet is

explained to them, and the youth and staff fill out an intake. Commissioner A reviewed one of the packets and noticed that the staff filled out most of it, but the youth refused to take part in the surveys.

Youth are allowed at least four to five phone calls per week from the dorms that are supervised by a Deputy Probation Officer (DPO). All phone calls are documented in Probation Case Management System (PCMS) and logged in a Call Log. Staff said that youth are allowed to take attorney calls when they do not interfere with a court ordered program and are typically supervised by a DPO. Visits take place in the gym on Sundays from 1pm to 4pm. Special visits are allowed in the Administrative Area and supervised by the officer of record. Accommodations for parents' schedules depend on director authorization.

Commissioner A notated that there is no Hope Center or individual confinement rooms at the facility. When students are suspended from school, they are sent to sit in different parts of the dormitory. Youth are sent to Camp Rockey when they need to "cool down". Youth can file grievances or complaints at any time in the facility. The grievance boxes and Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) posters are easily accessible and visible throughout the camp and in the dorms in both English and Spanish languages. While inspecting the dormitory rooms, Commissioner A noticed that "there were a handful of youth present,...a cleaning crew in the showers,...[and] both the interior of the dormitory and the interior of the bathrooms and showers...appeared clean and well maintained."

Commissioner A met with a Probation Officer who has been employed by the department for over 15 years. During this interview, several topics were explored, including staffing needs and strategies for improving youth outcomes. Commissioner A and the senior Deputy Probation Officer discussed a common lament of probation staff – the elimination of traditional discipline such as the use of the Special Handling Unit (SHU) and the use of chemical restraints. The discussion transitioned into identifying alternative strategies to achieve compliance with instructions or to disrupt youth-on-youth violence while eliminating the force-compliance modalities. The Probation Officer explained that without sufficient deterrence, officers lacked an overall sense of safety while at the camps. This observation was not limited to the officer's experience at Camp Paige but extended to all other facilities where they had worked. The Probation Officer stated that the only meaningful alternative to chemical restraints or the SHU is the creation and maintenance of personal relationships between staff and youth.

This interview then turned to the resources that the department had dedicated to educating the staff about the common-sense conclusion of the import of personal relationships. The veteran Probation Officer revealed that beyond superficial mention of "rapport building" in introductory trainings, they were not aware of any trainings offered by the department that enhanced or supported the basics of building rapport and relationships with the youth they are charged with supervising. Importantly, this Probation Officer recognized "relationship building" as critical to working with youth that present the highest level of risk. The Probation Officer offered an example of one of the staff who was exceptional at cultivating relationships with their supervisees (officer #2). The Probation Officer shared that officer #2 displayed empathy, fairness, and firmness when necessary; all in the context of maintaining order and promoting youth development within the camp. It was clear to this Probation Officer that officer #2 had invested in the relationships of youth which rendered a high rate of compliance and development out of the youth overseen. When Commissioner A asked how many other officers displayed this same skill at any level, they responded, "none." The Probation Officer then arranged for Commissioner A to meet with officer #2.

Commissioner A proceeded with interviewing officer #2 in the same location later that morning. The conversation between Commissioner A and officer #2 began with discussions around the overall safety concerns and the elimination of traditional discipline “tools,” such as chemical restraints and the SHU. When asked what the most important “tool” they had at their disposal working in a detention facility, officer #2 replied, “relationships.” Although officer #2 was a college graduate with a degree unrelated to psychology or behavioral science, officer #2 recognized intuitively that the scope of being a Probation Officer was establishing human connections, being empathetic, and ensuring clients that they are being understood. Officer #2 was keen to learn what interested and motivated the youth under their supervision. This knowledge combined with officer #2’s own lived experience and expertise was used to develop positive relationships with the supervised youth. As reported by the officer in the first interview as well as the youth interviewed afterwards, the youth under officer #2’s supervision were generally positively compliant and engaged with their rehabilitation program in a way that differed from youth supervised by other staff.

Commissioner A interviewed a youth immediately following the meeting with officer #2. The youth interviewed by Commissioner A was first detained at age 13 and expressed familiarity with the camp expectations since the youth had previously been to three camps and two juvenile halls. Commissioner A and the youth focused on his “graduate” status. Although the youth is not going to LACOE school, he is still involved in other programming with his peers – he completed the required high school coursework but was still able to participate in programs offered at his camp. Another topic that arose was identifying what characteristics made a Probation Officer a “good PO”. The youth believed that a “good PO” was “someone who listened to [the youth], was fair, and importantly, made an effort to establish a relationship beyond simply ordering [youth] around.” This youth shared that officer #2 was that type of officer. Further, the youth shared that officer #2 did inclusive things like start a book club and brought books of all reading levels in English and Spanish in for the youth to read and discuss. The youth expressed gratitude and appreciation towards officer #2 for making an effort to connect with clients through their own interests while being empathetic and engaged with the youth. The youth observed many youth under officer #2’s supervision were involved in interesting projects and were involved in fewer conflicts with staff and other youth.

Commissioner A concluded that the staff uniformly lack sufficient training and oversight on the benefits of forming positive relationships with the youth. The fact that there is no specific training or ongoing support for probation staff regarding positive youth relationships suggest this is a major deficit in the department’s training program and philosophy employed by the staff.

Inspection Report #2

Soon after arriving to the camp, **Commissioner B** observed the food services including delivery of food from the kitchen to the youth. Commissioner B also observed the youth eating lunch, which was the same food that Probation staff were eating. Youth were permitted to converse and supervised by Deputy Probation Officers (DPOs). After engaging in conversation with the Probation Officer, Commissioner B learned that both the youth and staff were dissatisfied with the grilled cheese sandwich due to the cheese not being melted. Commissioner B noted that the youth resorted to eating their stored snacks from their cubbies instead of the food offered for lunch that day.

Thereafter, Commissioner B visited the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) office where the interim principal discussed the school schedule, curriculum, and interdisciplinary exchanges between LACOE, Probation, and agency partners. The interim principal explained that an inter-agency (LACOE, Probation, and DMH) meeting is held every other week where advice is shared from all partners. For example, Probation has recently assisted LACOE with clarifying 'write-up' reports. Further, the interim principal reported feeling comfortable asking Probation for assistance and support in real-time situations, such as requesting support from a DPO to sit-in the classroom. The interim principal also referenced re-entry meetings between Probation, LACOE, and youth as being a positive feedback meeting to assist youth with class reintegration after suspension. Commissioner B was informed that discipline and positive reinforcement are applied using the Behavior Management Program, Policy RTSB-600. Partner agencies participate in the discipline/reward programs. Commissioner B concluded that teachers at this camp prefer to have Probation staff stay positioned in the classroom to support with activities and classroom management, which LACOE has made known to Probation leadership. The interim principal remarked that LACOE operations in the camp generally ran smoothly, "Great, [with] no problem," but additional classroom resources such as paraprofessionals and Behavior Technicians are needed. After interviewing school personnel and Probation Officers serving as LACOE liaisons, Commissioner B received increased concern over prominent drug usage as staff have witnessed youth seeming to be under the influence many times, in the classroom and in the dorm.

Commissioner B spent some time speaking to youth and staff in the dorm area – this was mid-afternoon as the school day was still going on. While in the dorm, Commissioner B observed some youth very involved in schoolwork and others struggling and worried because they could not re-enter the LACOE portal on their laptops. Some youth were new to the camp and needed their passwords re-set. Commissioner B informed the principal, and this issue was taken care of right away. Many youth Commissioner B spoke to complained about being bored and preferred listening to music. Commissioner B observed that TV and movies are available to youth in the dorm, but the content is limited – one youth said they watch a music television channel and have access to four DVD's – all of which have not changed since his arrival.

The last youth Commissioner B interviewed was recently admitted to this camp and on a modified program due to recent 'write-ups' related to marijuana use. The youth reported feeling upset and singled out for "getting caught smoking weed" while three other youth were also known to be using marijuana. Commissioner B also learned that this youth "did not receive a prize for basketball game" in which all youth participated, has received "7 write-ups" so far for frivolous things such as "not walking in a straight line," and expressed feelings of being targeted for "speak[ing] up and ask[ing] questions." Towards the conclusion of the interview, this youth shared details on the living conditions with Commissioner B. The youth expressed that the food at the camp "is nasty", the clothes do not quite fit, and the youth has "big blisters on his toes from [the] shoes." Commissioner B heard the youth regard the recreation time as being a positive experience when they can participate in it.

Camp Afflerbaugh

Youth Population (Physical)*	Number of Youth at Court	Facility's Rated Capacity	Total Staff (Payroll)	Total Peace Officers	Staff to Youth Ratio (Day)	Staff to Youth Ratio (Night)	Attempted Suicides	Escapes and documented attempts
20	1	120	67	49	2:1	2:1	0	1

Total Credentialed Teachers (LACOE)	Number of Students	Number of Graduates
4	Unverified	Unverified

*1 youth at BJNJH for court and 1 youth at Rocky's HOPE Center

Access to Medical and Mental Health Services

Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS)	Services Offered: 7 days / week	Coverage: 6:30 AM – 10:00 PM (RN's work 8-hour shifts) plus 24-hour access to on-call physician
Department of Mental Health (DMH)	Services Offered: 7 days / week	Coverage: 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM (Staff Shifts: 10-hour days, Sun – Wed or Wed – Sat.) plus 24-hour access to on-call DMH psychiatrist

Inspection Report

Camp Afflerbaugh's process with court and attorney access for youth is identical to that of Camp Paige in which youth are transported to the courthouse one night prior to their court date in orange attire. Additionally, the youth orientation procedures are identical to that of Camp Paige where Probation Staff orients the youth initially, followed by a full MDT meeting up to ten days later.

Youth are allowed at least one "casework" call per week from the dorms that are supervised by a DPO. They can get two additional "covid" calls per week from the offices. However, all phone calls are documented in PCMS. Staff said that youth are allowed to take attorney calls, which are rare, but also supervised by a DPO. One youth informed **Commissioner C** that recently an attorney called [the camp] for this youth, but the staff did not get the youth for the call.

Although there is not a Hope Center or confined rooms at Camp Afflerbaugh, youth were sent to Camp Rocky's Hope Center should confinement be needed. During Commissioner C's visit, there was one youth who had been sent to the Hope Center at Camp Rocky. When students are suspended, they are sent to sit in different parts of the dormitory. Both youth and staff complained that there was no place where youth could go to be alone, which would be the best de-escalation strategy.

Grievances were not reviewed by Commissioner C due to accessibility. Commissioner C requested access to them after 5:30 in the afternoon, but reportedly no one at the camp had access to the grievances at that time. However, it was noted by Commissioner C and POC staff that the grievances were all on paper and none were in Juvenile Institutions Grievance System (JIGS). Grievances being maintained in the JIGS system is alarming and of particular concern because one year ago, some camps experienced a significant glitch in the JIGS system. This glitch caused JIGS to generate zero grievances, but months later it was discovered that many grievances had been held in the system. Although Commissioner C was unable to access the paper grievances during the inspection, the POC staff confirmed earlier in the day during this

inspection that the grievances were mainly related to access to clothing, distasteful food, and teacher complaints. During one of Commissioner C's interviews with a youth, the youth was dismissive of the grievance procedure, and mentioned that many of the youth had written grievances regarding the food, and nothing was done about it. As a result, the youth concluded that writing grievances were ineffective. The grievance boxes and PREA posters are easily accessible and visible throughout the camp and in the dorms in both English and Spanish languages.

Commissioner C observed dinner in the dining hall and inspected the kitchen. Youth entered the dining hall in silence and were expected to remain in silence until the last few minutes. At that time, they were allowed to speak quietly. There were 4-6 Probation Officers and 14 youth present in the dining hall, there was ample nutritious food, but it did not look appetizing. One youth interviewed by Commissioner C complained that expired pudding and molded bread had been served to youth. Immediately after, Commissioner C went on to inspect the kitchen and reported seeing no evidence of expired or molded food. However, the dishwasher was broken and there appeared to be no plan to fix it despite a workorder being made two weeks earlier. *Note: Probation camp leadership and executive management were notified of this issue (dishwasher) and about a non-operational washing machine at the end of this inspection; they responded with plans to address this issue.*

Commissioner C observed two programs being offered after school the day of this inspection. One program was a youth peer support group facilitated by the camp director and the other was a photography class led by the Boyle Heights Art Collective. Because the youth group usually meets on Thursday, but was moved to Friday, it conflicted with the photography class. There were ten people in the youth peer support group. Usually there would be five youth in the photography class, but because of the scheduling conflict, only one youth attended the photography class. One of the youth shared that they only join the religious services and Saturday music classes.

Commissioner C spoke to several staff about discipline and positive behavior or incentivized programs and learned that staff utilize the RTSB-600 program. Staff complained about there not being enough negative consequence options to control youth's behavior and the youth complained about the inconsistent use of the RTSB-600 program. Youth expressed that some shifts of staff were overly strict compared to others, and in interviews, staff agreed that different shifts were inconsistent in discipline expectations.

According to interviews with both youth and staff, visiting is generally seamless and always supervised by Probation staff. Visits take place in shifts, with an average of four taking place at a time. Special visits are arranged when needed, but regular visits take place on weekends on the blacktop of the field. When it is too hot or too wet or cold, visits are held in the dining hall.

Commissioner C spent quite some time in the LACOE classrooms, talking with school personnel as well as engaging students. There were two classrooms at this facility: one was staffed by a soon-to-retire teacher and the other was staffed by a long-term substitute teacher. Although there is a special education teacher who goes between classes, the special education students are split into both classes. Commissioner C noticed that each class had over ten youth in it. One student was suspended several times while Commissioner C was conducting this inspection. During classroom observations, Commissioner C noted recent student work on the walls. The work demonstrated students had been reading and understanding novels, but the work they produced was far below grade level. Probation and LACOE staff have a working relationship, but neither are happy with the other. Teachers want probation staff in the classroom, but

probation staff remain outside of the class because they believe the teachers rely on them too much to handle classroom management, which is the teachers' purview. Probation staff also complain that teachers fail to "restructure," students, suspend too often, and exaggerate students' misbehavior, incorrectly using terms like "terrorist threats," in ways that harm youths' dispositions in court. Commissioner C noted that there is a new school principal assigned to this camp and suggests, while there is support for the inclusion model, there are concerns about splitting the special ed students into both classrooms, making the special ed teacher shuttle between them. Also noted by Commissioner C is that having classes of over 10 students might be too large.

In addition to all the brief interviews and engagement with youth and staff throughout the day, Commissioner C also conducted (15 – 20 mins) interviews with the camp director, the school principal, and two DPO's. The consensus among staff was that they] were concerned with their own safety because of increased contraband (drugs and weapons) being smuggled into the camps, with too few consequential options for youth's misbehavior. Two probation staff members spoke of a concern that a student tried to have a gun passed to him from outside the camp through the fence near the field. One DPO complained that he believed parents were bringing in the contraband and that parents should be searched.

Inspection Questions – Afflerbaugh and Paige

- 1. Has the Department considered adding signage on the trails/open areas around the facilities to possibly deter potential contraband or unauthorized visitors?*
- 2. Is Probation offering or facilitating supplemental training or classes for rapport and relationship-building between line staff and youth?*
- 3. Have the major appliance issues been resolved?*
- 4. Has vocational or trade programming increased at either camp?*
- 5. How is the suspected increase of drug use and contraband being addressed?*
- 6. Will specialized tactical training (related to adolescent development) be provided (or is it already being offered) to SEO's?*
- 7. Are any measures being taken to build youth's confidence in submitting grievances, particularly paper-form ones?*
- 8. Since there was a mix of students with a variety of needs (i.e., some very focused on their studies, on the cusp of graduating while others are just getting started and others who are sensitive to noises or easily distracted by them), is providing headphones to students when they have to work on the laptops during school hours an feasible solution?*

Camp Rockey

Youth Population (Physical)*	Number of Youth at Court	Facility's Rated Capacity	Total Staff (Payroll)	Total Peace Officers	Staff to Youth Ratio (Day)	Staff to Youth Ratio (Night)	Attempted Suicides	Escapes and documented attempts
23	1	125	87	72	2:3	2:3	0	0

Total Credentialed Teachers (LACOE)	Number of Students	Number of Graduates
6	22	1

*1 youth at court

Access to Medical and Mental Health Services

Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS)	Services Offered: 7 days / week	Coverage: 6:30 AM – 10:00 PM (RN's work 8-hour shifts) plus 24-hour access to on-call physician
Department of Mental Health (DMH)	Services Offered: 7 days / week	Coverage: 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM (Staff Shifts: 10-hour days, Sun – Wed or Wed – Sat.) plus 24-hour access to on-call DMH psychiatrist

Inspection Report #1

Upon arriving, **Commissioner D** noted that there was a check point at the entrance of the Camp due to an influx of contraband. After entering the facility, Commissioner D explained, "Overall, the facility was clean and maintained. There are nicely painted murals at different locations, and they list the students who helped create them." Commissioner D noted that there is no court holding area in the camp, and youth who have court dates are transported the night before in orange clothes to holding areas and remain in those outfits at court. Other court hearings are held by Webex with the youth in a conference room or another room on an ad hoc basis.

Orientation is done initially by probation staff only and then a second orientation is done as part of the first MDT meeting up to ten days later. At the first orientation, youth are given a packet, the packet is explained to them, and the youth and staff fill out an intake form. Grievance procedures are also reviewed with youth during this initial period. Grievance boxes and PREA posters are easily accessible and visual to youth in the dorm and throughout the camp. PREA posters appear in both English and Spanish. It was reported that there have been forty-four grievances for the calendar year.

Youth are allowed at least one call per week from the dorms that are supervised by a Deputy Probation Officer (DPO). All phone calls are documented in PCMS and logged into a Call Log. Commissioner D explained that Camp Rockey has a Hope Center, which also takes in youth from neighboring camps Afflerbaugh and Paige. Youth are sent to Camp Rockey when they need to "cool down".

Visits take place in the Dining Hall on Sundays from 1pm to 4pm. Special visits are allowed in the administrative area and supervised by the officer of record. Accommodations for parents' schedules depend on the Probation Officers' caseloads.

Commissioner D noticed that the gym had recently been renovated which included “new lighting, new paint, padded walks, and new hardwood flooring.” The track and field area appeared “well maintained”.

Thereafter, Commissioner D spoke to several staff from Probation, the Kitchen, and LACOE. During an interview with a DPO, it was highlighted that there was a sense of stability at Camp Rockey that could be credited to the work ethic and tone set by staff. This DPO noted that there was one DPO who was an example to follow. Next, Commissioner D inquired about a radio frequency issue from a previous inspection, and the DPO confirmed that this issue had been resolved by reducing the radio’s range. Commissioner D spoke with the kitchen head chef, who used his life experience to build rapport with the youth, to eventually mentor and motivate them. The Chef was a credentialed teacher with the ability to certify the youth in SafeServ Management.

The LACOE counselor explained to Commissioner D that both Mission College and Glendale Community College offered courses to graduated youth. Commissioner D inquired about LACOE’s role when receiving feedback from the youth related to school, as several youth shared their opinion about school with Commissioner D. Commissioner D learned that some youth interviewed did not have positive feedback related to their schooling as they felt that they had been “failed by LACOE.” The LACOE counselor who engaged Commissioner D reported that they would review the feedback provided.

Some youth shared their desire to “get out of camp” to pursue their trade of choice and care for their families. Several youth informed Commissioner D of their positive experience with their DPO (*this is the same DPO that was referenced above*). The youth described this DPO to Commissioner D as “awesome”, “inspiring” and how this DPO “needs to be cloned”.

Inspection Report #2

Commissioner E arrived at the facility in the late morning. Once Commissioner E entered the facility, the “youth all looked healthy and well groomed.” When describing the physical condition of the facility, Commissioner E stated that most buildings were “aging but in general good condition,” and “the dining hall roof had a leaking air conditioner where there was a significant amount of slimy mold growing where the water ran off the roof.”

After interviewing youth and staff, Commissioner D stated that “staff are very responsive to requests for attorney calls.” Commissioner D noted that those same youth described the orientation process as “comprehensive” and “multi-disciplinary” once they arrived. One youth felt that their stay in the Hope Center when they first arrived at Camp Rockey was a way to “feel-out the new youth.”

Commissioner D inspected the kitchen, observed a meal, and interviewed kitchen staff and youth. Commissioner D described the kitchen as being “in very good condition with all the equipment working and all the food apparently stored properly.” Commissioner D noticed that the “food was healthy and looked like typical high school cafeteria food except that students were served grapes that did not look fresh and canned green beans that looked extremely unappetizing.” Commissioner D observed that the youth sat in their assigned groups and were allowed to talk to each other and to staff. Commissioner D “saw no youth taking advantage of the ability to talk by being overly loud or disruptive” and described the staffing as being “ample”. Commissioner D heard the staff congratulate winners of a contest and thanked youth for their good behavior that day.

While observing the culinary arts class, which was taught during the LACOE school day in the kitchen, Commissioner D noticed “youth were working well together as a team. The youth and the teacher seemed proud to show off their work. The teacher said that the youth had done bookwork before cooking and that they should all be job-ready and certified in food handling by the end of the class.”

Commissioner D reviewed grievances and obtained accounts from the youth about the grievance process. Commissioner D noted that most of the interviewed youth had never filed a grievance. The inconsistencies between what he was being told and what he read when reviewing the written grievances was alarming to Commissioner D. During this inspection, the most common grievances were related to the “temperature in the dorms being either too hot or too cold.” Commissioner D explained that several grievances were specific complaints about statements made by DPOs or teachers. Commissioner D noted that one grievance was about a teacher “yelling” at students, which Commissioner D recalled observing a class where “a teacher raise[d] her voice repeatedly at students.”

Commissioner D observed several programs after school. Commissioner D noted that educational programs were run virtually by Mission College which included a college health course, an OSHA class, and a work program class, but only four youth were in that program. Commissioner D stated that ADVOT ran a class for 2-4 youth that appeared to be a life skills class. Commissioner D also observed Tia Chucha’s multi-media art class where there were two youth participating. Commissioner D observed about six youth playing sports under the supervision of probation staff and the remaining youth appeared to be with DMH. Overall, “there were plenty of programs available for that one hour after class, but there appeared to be holes in the programming for other time periods.”

By engaging in conversations with youth and staff, Commissioner D gathered that visiting in the dining halls “goes well” and staff were described as “respectful”. One staff informed Commissioner D that they believed that one family member had been bringing in contraband during visiting hours, but it was stopped. Staff described searching youth for contraband after visiting hours, and the youth explained to Commissioner D that the searches were done “respectfully and for good reason.”

Commissioner D went on to observe two classes where school continued to be a “weak point”. Commissioner D stated, “In the first class, students were asked to finish up notes from an earlier video and discussion of current events and then use their computers for computer-based reading instruction. The current events work involved summarizing, and struggling youth were allowed to simply copy the work off the board.” Commissioner D also noted that “students were all engaged in doing the work”. Commissioner D’s observations of the second class included “Students [being] asked to write a couple of sentences from what sounded like an RTSA prompt, but most of the class time...was spent with students defying the teacher and the teacher escalating the problem by raising her voice and ordering students to follow her instructions. The paraeducator seemed to try to support the teacher by also issuing stern instructions to the youth and then telling the teacher when the students didn’t comply. One DPO wandered around the room quietly telling youth to relax and not make it worse.” Overall, it was not an environment where learning was possible. Commissioner D’s observations “reinforced what students said, which was that the computers are the best teachers at Rockey and that classroom instruction was overall unengaging and hard to care about for any reason other than trying to get units.”

Commissioner D concluded the inspection with youth interviews. “One youth [identified as getting in more trouble than many of the other youth]...described being sent to the Hope Center once or twice per month since arriving...for only a few hours or until evening so that [the youth] could cool off. [The youth] described a system where probation staff would leave the door slightly open or closed, depending on [the youth’s] apparent ability to control [their] emotions,...as a signal that [the youth] could come out and talk [which was liked by the youth]. [The youth] described being put in the Hope Center once for three days, the most [the youth had] ever been there, not based on [their] ability to control [their] emotions but based on the seriousness of [their] offense (starting a multi-party fight). In this way,...the Hope Center is occasionally used as a punishment and not a ‘cool-down’ opportunity. But overall, the youth was glad to have the Hope Center there for when [the youth] needed time away from everyone.”

The interviewed youth informed Commissioner D that they “feel the discipline was appropriate and fair most of the time. [One officer] was specifically singled out as ‘being on people’s bumper’ all the time but in a good way.” Commissioner D observed several instances of staff giving youth positive verbal reinforcement and getting group rewards of food as encouragement, but some youth complained about female DPOs being “too sensitive.” While it was an obviously sexist statement (which Commissioner D pointed out to them), it also seems to indicate that there is more that the male staff can do to ensure the youth respect female staff equally.

Interviews with Probation staff revealed concerns expressed about judges giving youth long detention time in the Hope Center. It was highlighted that there was a youth dispositioned to 30 days in the Hope Center, for which staff felt that this was “too long.” In addition, concerns about the utilization of the Hope Center, outside its intended use as “cool-down” was noted.

Inspection Questions – Rockey

1. *Is there a work order in place to address the leaking air-cooler in the kitchen (which has a layer of moss or mold along the outer edge of the roof)?*
2. *Does the Department have a plan to incorporate credible messengers into the camp framework?*
3. *How is the Hope Center being utilized by neighboring camps (Afflerbaugh, Paige)?*
4. *Are there any administrative procedures in place to avoid prolonged periods of time spent in the HOPE Center?*
5. *Is there an identified graffiti-prevention or graffiti removal program?*

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