



# San Diego County Probation Department

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*Adolfo Gonzales, Chief Probation Officer*

October 20, 2017

Edward Weiner  
Juvenile Justice Commission Chair  
2901 Meadow Lark Drive  
San Diego, CA 92123

## Response to the 2017 Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) Facility Inspection Report for Camp Barrett (CB)

Dear Mr. Weiner:

We are in receipt of the Juvenile Justice Commission 2017 Facility Inspection Report for Camp Barrett. Below, please find the San Diego County Probation Department responses to the JJC Recommendations as it pertains to Camp Barrett.

**RECOMMENDATION #1:** "Collaborate with additional community partners to provide mentorship opportunities to the youth."

**RESPONSE #1:** Probation actively collaborates with our judicial, community, and county partners, as well as educational and mental health partners to identify programs and areas we can improve and enhance opportunities for youth, including mentoring opportunities.

**RECOMMENDATION #2:** "Increase visitation times and add more space at the facility to provide families an area to meet with their kids."

**RESPONSE #2:** Camp Barrett has added Information Technology visitation opportunities using Skype and Google Hangouts, thus enhancing visitation opportunities for youth and parents on a weekly basis. Most recently, Camp Barrett embarked on a facility enhancement project to refurbish and restore the outside visitation area for youth and parents.

**RECOMMENDATION #3:** "Add more evidenced based group therapy programs and trauma focused programs."

**RESPONSE #3:** Probation has existing contracts for a number of programs for youth at Camp Barrett. Each existing program will be reevaluated as part of the contract cycle and Probation will continue to identify and explore options to enhance evidence based programming. Additionally, our partnership with the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform under the Youth in Custody Practice Model technical assistance program is expected to result in additional evidence based programming recommendations.

**RECOMMENDATION #4:** “Many of the children and staff expressed that having the camp in a rural setting is helpful for self-regulation and providing a broader perspective of the world. However, family visits are very challenging given the distance from any city. It is difficult to keep staff for programs for the same reason. Therefore, the JJC agrees with the decision to move the program to San Diego. In order to maintain some of the current benefits afforded by Camp Barrett, the JJC strongly recommends that when the Camp Barrett program moves to Kearny Mesa, children continue to have access to nature-based activities such as hiking in the mountains or taking walks on the beach.”

**RESPONSE #4:** In preparation for the urban camp, meetings are ongoing in order to prepare for the transition from a rural setting to an urban setting. Probation continues to review and evaluate programming opportunities that will continue to support opportunities for youth, including nature-based opportunities.

**RECOMMENDATION #5:** “Add cameras to areas where cameras are insufficient to record incidents.”

**RESPONSE #5:** Probation will continue to evaluate the need for additional cameras and adjustment of camera angles of existing cameras.

**RECOMMENDATION #6:** “Camp Barrett staff, teachers, and counselors are doing an excellent job keeping youth on track academically. To complement this success, the JJC recommends that Camp Barrett implement a program to bring admissions counselors and current students from local two- and four-year colleges to the facility to discuss academic opportunity. This exposure can resonate especially powerfully for detained youth because many are committing to making significant lifestyle changes and contemplating hopeful futures. The hope is that greater exposure to the possibility of higher education will lessen the often times regressive pull of the neighborhoods to which many youth must return. Specifically, the JJC recommends the following:

- a. Consider allowing visits to a two- and four-year college in San Diego. College visits may not be feasible for the entire Camp at once, but the staff, teachers, and counselors can work to identify the youth for whom a college visit is most appropriate. (Ideally, all youth at the Camp would be able to make a visit, even if this meant taking only 20 to 30 youth at a time over the course of a week.)
- b. Partner with one or more local colleges or universities (Miramar College, Southwestern Community College, San Diego State University, University of California/San Diego) and invite admissions counselors and current students to visit Camp Barrett and discuss academic programs.
- c. Consider implementing an SAT readiness program. At a minimum, this would entail 1) making sure youth know how to access the entire catalog of free SAT preparation materials provided by College Board, and 2) providing an additional 45 minutes of time two or three days a week to work through the material. A more aggressive vision for the program would see teachers and staff providing instruction on each area of the test, as well as individual tutoring opportunities.”

**RESPONSE #6 a and b:** Currently, Camp Barrett youth receive visits from colleges, various vocational placements, and the military. Additionally, Camp Barrett youth attend quarterly career fairs at Camp Barrett and at the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) main campus. Probation and the SDCOE will continue to collaborate closely to identify academic opportunities for youth. In coordination with SDCOE, Probation will assess the feasibility of transporting some youth for college campus visits.

**RESPONSE #6 c:** Readiness materials are provided to any Camp Barrett student who wishes to pursue the SAT, ACT, ASVAB tests, or Accu-placer assessment. Additionally, youth who wish to pursue the SAT, ACT, ASVAB or Accu-placer may receive tutoring during the academic day, and have access to computer based programming tutorials.

**RECOMMENDATION #7:** “As a general matter, recreational time in juvenile detention facilities is viewed as a passive affair--youth are permitted to do as they please subject to compliance with the rules and the availability of activities. Although there is nothing wrong with this approach, the JJC believes that recreational time provides a unique opportunity to facilitate team-building and camaraderie, which in turn can have a positive impact on social development. When recreational time is idle time, youth can retreat into their corners, reinforcing the same in-group/out-group mentality that many bring into the facility. When recreational time is treated as a time for pro-active social engagement, there is an opportunity to use sports and other competitive activities to break down barriers, change perceptions and build bridges. To that end, the JJC recommends the following:

- a. Consider developing a recreational basketball, flag football, and/or soccer league. The teams would be formed by random selection of interested youth. Random selection is critical so that youth cannot form teams based on pre-existing relationships or pre-existing biases.
- b. Consider holding a Camp-wide Team Competition once or twice a year. The Competition would involve 10-15 activities in different areas: physical (e.g., 100m dash, most free-throws in a minute), intellectual (e.g., vocabulary definitions, most Algebra II problems completed correctly in five minutes), and artistic (painting, sculpting, poetry). Scores would be assigned for each event, and in each area. The team with the highest total score would win, but teams could also win in specific areas, or individuals could win personal awards.”

**RESPONSE #7 a and b:** Camp Barrett will continue to explore opportunities to enhance and expand opportunities for recreation that will have positive impacts in the areas of team building, bridge building, social development, prosocial engagement.

Thank you for this opportunity to respond to the Juvenile Justice Commission 2017 Facility Inspection Report for Camp Barrett.

Very respectfully,



ADOLFO GONZALES  
CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER

CC: Rueben Littlejohn, Assistant Chief Probation Officer  
Scott Huizar, Deputy Chief of Institutional Services  
Christina F. Nyikes, Division Chief, Camp Barrett

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