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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARCH 14, 2022

Probation Oversight Commission Releases Report on Education in Los Angeles County Probation Juvenile Halls and Camps

LOS ANGELES - The Los Angeles County Probation Oversight Commission presented and unanimously accepted a report on the state of education in Los Angeles County Probation juvenile halls and camps at a public special meeting today that highlighted four key findings from quality of instruction to staffing.

Commissioners shared their observations, findings, and recommendations based on months of classroom observations of interviews with staff, students, and education advocates in the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) juvenile court schools.

The report describes four key findings, explained through individual anecdotes and overall observations:

- Most classrooms lack a culture of learning
- The quality of Instruction is generally far below expectations
- Staffing of classrooms creates barriers to learning
- A few on-site school leaders exhibited the ability and intent to Improve Instruction

First District Supervisor Hilda Solis, along with education advocates from around the County and young people who were formally incarcerated, asked the Probation Oversight Commission to be the “eyes and ears” of the public on this issue to address significant concerns echoed by the public and by the Department of Justice in a 2021 [settlement agreement](#).

In keeping with the Commission’s role as a Civilian Oversight body, the report does not reflect a technical or scientific evaluation of education in Los Angeles juvenile court schools. Instead, the report offers thoughtful observations of Commissioners and staff, with varying levels of experience and expertise in education, who endeavored to be objective and fair and make findings based on educational practices and norms they would consider acceptable for their own children and for young people who have experienced high levels of trauma and educational disruption.

The chair of the Commission’s Programs & Services subcommittee, Sean Garcia-Leys, said he hopes the report “helps focus County departments and all stakeholders on making student engagement the number one priority for improving the education of our incarcerated youth.”



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The recommendations in the report include:

- Empower effective principals, teachers, and youth to collaborate with each other and the public to lead site-specific improvement efforts.
- Encourage students to bring their authentic selves to their academic work.
- Integrate arts, cooperative learning, project-based learning, and cultural relevance into classroom instruction.
- Give more weight to educational needs when balancing education and safety.
- Take better advantage of low staff-to-student ratios in lesson-planning
- Ensure that the new secure track facility begins with the best possible educational program.
- Make public all documents related to the Probation Department and LACOE's agreement with the California Department of Justice.

Many members of the public addressed the Commission at the meeting, sharing concern, but not surprised about the findings and recommendations. While there was broad agreement that the carceral setting in a juvenile hall or camp is not conducive to the educational needs of youth, the report indicates multiple areas of achievable improvement.

The Commission will continue to engage the public on this issue and push for much-needed improvements and accountability in the classrooms of LACOE's juvenile court schools.

Commission Chair Franky Carrillo reiterated the importance of this work. "The youth in our juvenile halls and camps deserve classrooms that promote learning, healing, and successful re-entry into the community. The Commission will keep working on this issue until that goal is achieved," said Carrillo.

The detailed report can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

To learn more about the Commission, please visit <https://poc.lacounty.gov> and subscribe to the mailing list.

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