

2023-2024 KERN COUNTY GRAND JURY



**Kern County Probation Department
Youth Services Bureau
“Trying to Make A Dollar Out of Fifteen Cents”**

**Release Date
March 18, 2024**

KERN COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT YOUTH SERVICES BUREAU

“TRYING TO MAKE A DOLLAR OUT OF FIFTEEN CENTS”

Tupac Shakur

SUMMARY:

There is a perception within the community that the Probation Youth Services Bureau (PYSB) are the “Truancy Police” for delinquent juveniles. This is **not** the case in the 21st Century. Most people do not understand the complexity or the services that PYSB deals with daily. Arrests range from misdemeanors to felonies, including sexual and physical assaults, arson, and murder. The 2023-2024 Kern County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) completed a detailed investigation of Kern County Probation Youth Services Bureau. The investigation included interviews with key staff members of the PYSB, visits to three detention facilities to investigate their operations, and reviews of confinement conditions.

On June 30, 2023, the California Department of Corrections Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) completed the realignment of the juvenile offender population with the closure of its statewide facilities. PYSB is now responsible for housing and treatment of Kern County’s most serious and violent offenders under Senate Bill 823 (SB 823). The Grand Jury noted that two of the detention facilities, Camp Erwin Owen (CEO) and James G. Bowles Juvenile Hall (JGBJH), are over 80 years old and showing signs of advanced aging resulting from deferred maintenance on the facilities.

The PYSB has acute staff recruitment and retention problems resulting in mandatory overtime, which may impact the delivery of essential services to the youthful offender population. The staff is motivated, dedicated, and share a keen interest in preparing wards for further juvenile court processes and the transitional reentry back into their communities, after receiving a second chance to become law abiding citizens.

PURPOSE OF INQUIRY:

Pursuant to California Penal Code §919(b), the Grand Jury shall inquire into the conditions of confinement and management of the public correctional institutions within the county. This also includes authority over facilities housing youthful offenders. In addition to inquiry into the general conditions of correctional facilities, the Grand Jury addressed conditions affecting both the in-custody populations and the health and welfare of staff. The Grand Jury was particularly interested in assessing the impacts on Kern County regarding SB 823, Division of Juvenile Justice Realignment.

METHODOLOGY:

The Grand Jury visited the three probation detention facilities: Camp Erwin Owen, James G. Bowles Juvenile Hall, and Crossroads/Achievement Perseverance and Excellence

(Crossroads/APEX). The Grand Jury also reviewed the internet, Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) reports, Kern County Probation Department Annual reports for the last four years, and previous Grand Jury reports. Interviews were conducted with staff members at all three detention facilities and key members of the administrative management team. The Grand Jury conducted interviews with agencies that partner with probation for the success of their programs such as the Kern Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (KernBHRS), Dream Center and Kern County General Services. Interviews were also conducted with Kern County Superintendent of Schools (KCSOS) and two Superior Court Judges at the Juvenile Justice Center.

DISCUSSION OF FACTS:

A local law enforcement officer makes an arrest of a juvenile who has allegedly broken the law. The juvenile may be released or transported to JGBJH, where the youth is turned over to a Deputy Probation Officer (DPO). The arresting officer completes the Arietis (arrest report) which is given to the DPO, and the juvenile is booked in custody. The arresting officer is then free to leave and continue their job with little chance of seeing this juvenile again.

Within 48 hours, the DPO makes a detailed assessment of the juvenile and depending upon the assessment and charges, has two choices; release the juvenile with a letter of warning or detain the juvenile and forward the assessment to the District Attorney's Office (DAO) for review. The DAO will either decide to release the juvenile or recommend the juvenile to be held for arraignment. If held for arraignment, the juvenile is now the responsibility and under the supervision of a Youth Service Officer (YSO). From this time forward, PYSB will be responsible for mental health and/ or substance abuse treatment, continuation of their education, housing and food, medical care, juvenile court appointments, and release back into the community. The screening and release, adjudication, and treatment depend upon the severity of the offense. See Appendix A: Court Hearing Flow Chart and Appendix B: Department Objectives Measured.

The PYSB is a branch of the Kern County Probation Department (Probation Department). This branch consists of in-custody facilities located at the JGBJH, CEO, and Crossroads/APEX for youthful offenders:

1. Camp Erwin Owen is a 65-bed forestry camp located in Kernville, California for male youth aged 14-18 with confinement of six months to one year. CEO had a population of 34 on October 15, 2023, however, these numbers may fluctuate weekly. It is the oldest of the in-custody facilities, opening in 1938, as an honor and low-level security work camp. The Grand Jury considers CEO as California's "model of Boy's Town." This camp has many of the same reforms and rehabilitative treatment features, including an elected self-governing body, a mayor, and town council. This environment promotes mutually respectful relationships between the youth and staff. CEO is also a working farm with chickens, pork products and vegetable gardening operations. CEO may be viewed as semi self-sustaining, producing most of the food consumed by its population, and providing food to the division's other in-custody facilities. CEO provides academic and vocational achievement programs, including high school completion, General Education

Development (GED), college preparation courses, an Automotive Services Excellence (ASE) certificate, and virtual welding training. These programs offer diplomas and certifications that prepare the youth to enter the workforce once released from custody.

2. The James G. Bowles Juvenile Hall opened in 1952. Originally, it was established as the only short-term detention facility for youthful offenders pending juvenile court processing and adjudication. The JGBJH, a 108-bed in-custody facility, is PYSB's higher security facility for at risk female and male offenders. Within the facility, Pathways Academy is for female offenders and the Furlough Treatment Program (FTP) is for male probation violators.

During the Grand Jury's visit on September 2, 2023, the total population was 95 offenders with 72 males in general population, 9 females, including 2 from DJJ, assigned to Pathways Academy, and 14 males in FTP. These units provide medical, mental healthcare, rehabilitative treatment, and family services. JGBJH's Central School provides continued education to Pathways Academy, FTP, and youth pending the court process. Vocational classes are not available at this school site.

3. In 2004, PYSB opened a 120-bed long term residential treatment facility at Crossroads for male youth ages 14-18 with confinements up to one year. This facility provides a well-rounded reform model that offers academic, healthcare, and evidence based behavioral treatment programs. These programs are specifically designed to redirect youthful offenders from destructive behavior to constructive participation in their rehabilitation. Redwood High School, located at Crossroads/APEX, provides educational and vocational curricula. Vocational classes are provided at this location with some courses leading to opportunities of paid internships in the community through partnerships with Garden Pathways, Kern Community Foundation, and Continental Labor Services. Youth are eligible to earn the National Center for Construction Education Research Core Certification, recognized internationally in the construction industry. In addition, youth may receive certification in CPR, first aid, forklift safety, virtual welding, HVAC, auto detailing, and the Switch Electric Car Lab Program. There is also a farm to table and culinary arts program available. Post secondary education includes Bakersfield College courses through the Rising Scholars Program.
4. On July 1, 2021, SB 823 was passed initiating the closure of the Division of Juvenile Justice. California's Governor signed the legislation that shut down DJJ because of overcrowding, lack of medical and mental health facilities, illicit drugs within the facilities, and the use of excessive force by detention officers. Probation Departments statewide receive funding to provide county-based supervision, medical, mental health and substance abuse treatment, and needed family support for the rehabilitation for its youthful offenders.

On June 30, 2023, DJJ completed realigning the juvenile offender population pursuant to SB 823 with the closure of its remaining statewide facilities. The PYSB is now responsible for all youth that are committed based upon the most serious and violent felonies as defined by Welfare Institution Code §707(b). Three male youths were in the

original group returned to Kern County. The Crossroads facility was modified to include the APEX unit, which is dedicated to treating high security youth ages 18-25 with lengths of confinement up to seven years. Today the APEX male population has grown to 26 and is projected to increase by 10-15 youthful offenders per year. Areas of future concern for PYSB will be early release and monitoring programs for these offenders.

Probation Department Budget:

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2024 approved budget for the Probation Department is \$126,683,817. PYSB's share of the budget is \$73,476,614. The Probation Department receives funding from 60 different revenue sources, including County, State, and Federal governments. Many of these funds have conditions on its usage established by legislative action. The State requires annual expenditure reports to account for these funds. The Probation Department has an Executive Management Team that meets weekly on the administration and disbursement of state funds. Funds committed for juvenile services cannot be used for adult services or vice versa.

Revenue streams supporting PYSB approved budget for FY 2023-2024 are:

1. SB 823 Division of Juvenile Justice Realignment Fund \$13,050,959 dedicated for:
 - a. APEX facility and support staff
 - b. The approved new multipurpose facility for JGBJH
2. 2011 Realignment Primary Revenue Fund \$8,421,731 dedicated for:
 - a. Youth Offender Block Grant provides funding for Bridges Career Development Academy site and staffing, mental health and substance abuse staffing at Pathways Academy, CEO, FTR staff, and Crossroads support staff.
 - b. Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act provides funding for Youth Re-Entry Supervisory Unit staff, Youth Programs and Support Unit staff, Re-Entry, ADA, Programming Units for all facilities.
3. American Rescue Fund \$1,660,000 (Cost of Living Adjustment for current year only).
4. Intergovernmental \$6,251,737. State and Federal monies for training, salaries, and grants.
5. Local Public Safety \$18,292,051. This is **not Measure "K"**,¹ but Prop 172, a statewide ballot issue approved on November 11, 1993.
6. Kern County Net General Fund budget for FY 2023-2024 is \$31,894,057, or approximately 25% of the Probation Department's approved budget. In California, the overall average for Probation Departments in all counties is 43%. See Appendix C: California Probation Departments General Fund Percentages.

¹ Measure K is a one-cent sale tax approved by voters in the November 8, 2022, election. Measure K was enacted to provide funding for emergency services, law enforcement, and fire protection in unincorporated areas of Kern County.

7. PYSB's actual budget expenditures in year 2022 were as follows:
 - a. Salaries and employee benefits were \$14,445,685 at JGBJH, \$8,991,734 at Crossroads, \$6,310,675 at CEO for a total of \$29,748,094 to operate the three detention facilities 24 hours per day 7 days a week.
 - b. Due to aging detention facilities, the cost to maintain the infrastructure has increased. Expenditures in supplies and services, less labor, for JGBJH is \$756,425, Crossroads \$968,461, and CEO \$597,359 for a total of \$2,322,245 per year.

Support Organizations:

Probation Youth Services Bureau relies on KCSOS, KernBHRS, Kern Medical Center, many non-profits, and General Services to provide the support services necessary to accomplish its mission.

1. The California Department of Education Juvenile Court Schools provides public education for youth who reside in a detention facility. The KCSOS provides all educational materials and staffing, including principals, teachers, and support staff. The PYSB provides the safety and security for the educational staff at each facility. Youth take courses that lead to a high school diploma or GED certificate. Youth are receiving the classroom instruction as required by the State of California Education Code. Upon release from a facility, the youth can resume their education at their last school attended, or at a school of their choice.
2. After an initial evaluation of the youth detained, a staggering 65-70% have a mental health condition. KernBHRS, with the Juvenile Probation Psychiatric Services team, provides mental health and other supportive services to youth detained or committed to one of the three detention centers. Each facility has mental health staff on site. JGBJH and Crossroads/APEX receive these services through KernBHRS. Youth at CEO receive these services through a contracted agency, College Community Services (CCS). KernBHRS was reimbursed by PYSB \$1,740,034 for mental health and substance abuse treatment at the three detention facilities, as specified in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for FY 2022-2023. This amount will increase to \$2,105,206 for FY 2023-2024. KernBHRS absorbs the additional cost for therapists at JGBJH that are not covered by the MOU and then passed that cost on to Medi-Cal. The youth at JGBJH, CEO and Crossroads/APEX receive mental health treatment addressing the top criminogenic needs:
 - Antisocial Behavior
 - Criminal Associates
 - Antisocial Personality
 - Criminal Thinking
 - Abuse of alcohol and/or drugs

- Family factors that include criminality and variety of psychological problems in the family of origin
 - Low levels of involvement in pro-social leisure activities
 - Low levels of personal education, vocational, or financial achievement
3. Kern Medical Center provides health services for all three detention facilities.
 4. The responsibility for the supervision of youth under the jurisdiction of Juvenile Court, as it pertains to their compliance with court ordered terms, falls squarely on PYSB. Non-profit agencies and volunteers work collaboratively with PYSB to provide and enhance services for youth that can aid in their compliance with court orders and rehabilitation goals that may not be available. Non-profits such as Garden Pathways, Dream Center and the Wendale Davis Foundation are some examples that assist with youth.
 5. General Services coordinates new construction, purchases, and provides maintenance for all juvenile detention facilities. The PYSB paid General Services an annual countywide allocation fee. In FY 2020-2021 the fee was \$986,828. General Services received \$231,463 for routine maintenance and repairs at Crossroads and JGBJH.
 6. Large projects assigned to General Services receive a charge of 10-30% overhead burden added to the cost of the project. General Services is currently conducting a facilities assessment study on the condition of County buildings to evaluate possible replacement, including all juvenile detention facilities. General Services has projects that need to be completed at JGBJH, including the replacement of metal room doors at a cost of \$1,690,000, and roofing repairs for \$394,000.
 7. The Kern County Board of Supervisors also approved \$40,000 for the design phase of a multi-purpose facility at JGBJH.

Future PYSB projects that require General Services attention:

1. PYSB's mental health facilities at CEO are inadequate. Two trailers that are used for mental healthcare treatment are over 40 years old. These trailers show evidence of leaky roofs with water damage to interior ceilings and floors, holes in the floor providing access for vermin, and termite damage. These trailers do not provide adequate privacy and confidential treatment space as required under mental health care policy and the Healthcare Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). The 2017-2018 Grand Jury report recommended replacing these trailers. (See Appendix D)
2. JGBJH has no onsite emergency generators for use in case of power outages. Staff will be unable to run the electric pumps that supply the potable freshwater system and emergency fire protection when there is a power failure.

- JGBJH has peeling paint in rooms housing youth located in Pathways Academy and the Furlough Treatment Program. The condition of these rooms do not meet the standards established by the BSCC. (See Appendix D)

Staffing Issues:

Probation Youth Services Bureau has an approved staff of 389 employees with 72 vacancies. Most vacancies are in the detention facilities, which operate 24/7. Staffing levels are mandated by Title 15, requiring a youth to staff ratio of 15:1 for normal operations and 10:1 during school hours. The exception is APEX, where the youth to staff ratio is lower at 15:3 due to the high-risk offenders.

The PYSB is experiencing chronic understaffing as a result of low wages, job burnout from mandatory overtime, and inability to find applicants with the required educational background. The hiring of extra-help is addressing the need to meet the operational requirement to safely operate the facilities. Mandatory overtime at the three detention facilities causes “job burnout,” and negatively impacts job performance and work/life balance. Frequently, YSOs are required to work “double” shifts (16 hours). The total cost for overtime in FY 2022-2023 was \$1,819,459, up by \$433,463 over the prior year. Mandatory overtime paid at the detention facilities is shown below.

OVERTIME COST				
Fiscal Year	JGBJH	Crossroad/Apex	CEO	Total
2019-2020	\$537,704	\$287,463	\$181,771	\$1,006,938
2020-2021	\$527,806	\$285,947	\$206,651	\$1,020,404
2021-2022	\$772,777	\$387,083	\$226,136	\$1,385,996
2022-2023	\$859,443	\$567,282	\$392,734	\$1,819,459

(Created by: Grand Jury)

The YSO position requires a minimum of 60 semester or 90 quarter units of college coursework, preferably in behavioral sciences or any combination of education and experience. Knowledge of individual and group behavior, principles and techniques of counseling and de-escalation, treatment modalities, and evidence-based practices and programs. Applicants must be a United States citizen or a permanent alien resident with no felony conviction. Applicants must pass a medical and physical examination. These requirements are for both extra help and permanent positions. The work performed by a YSO is complex and has legal liabilities. All YSO positions are required to work any shift during a 24/7, 40-hour work week. Current Kern County entry level pay is \$21.14 -\$25.26 hourly.

- On April 01, 2024, fast food workers in California will earn \$20.00 per hour without the education, experience and responsibility required of a YSO
- Bakersfield City Park Rangers, who are only required to have a secondary education, earn \$30.48 per hour with a 6% raise scheduled for July 2024

In 2023, the Probation Department recommended wage increases based on the higher education requirement for staff and staff shortages, and for three additional positions in the unincorporated areas of Kern County. The case load for these officers working in the unincorporated areas is 90

probationers to one officer. The recommended ratio of probationers to officer is 30:1 up to 50:1 as the norm. **This recommendation failed to meet the Measure K Committee’s threshold for consideration for funding.**

The Probation Department is working with the Kern County Human Resources Department and the officers’ union to eliminate the Youth Services Officer I classification. This will effectively end the Youth Services Officer I/II flex promotional series. This would allow a higher entry pay salary for new YSOs. This proposal would require approval by the Civil Services Commission.

FINDINGS:

- F1. The PYSB is unable to recruit and retain staff because of its inability to be wage competitive with other law enforcement agencies, causing a staff shortage, which results in excessive overtime pay.
- F2. The Probation Department would have more insight into employee retention if leadership conducted exit interviews when employees depart to determine their reason for leaving.
- F3. The mental healthcare trailers at CEO do not provide the confidential or therapeutic workspaces required to perform counseling duties, possibly violating HIPAA laws.
- F4. The JGBJH has no onsite electrical generator to provide backup power to the water pumps to ensure that the facility has potable water and emergency fire protection. This leaves the facility and the youth at risk during electrical outages.
- F5. The Grand Jury also observed a damaged roof and hot water tank on one of the two CEO dormitories. This does not allow staff to use this building to house youth as intended.
- F6. The JGBJH has dormitory rooms with peeling paint, leaving some rooms in the detention facility sub-standard as outlined by BSCC.
- F7. The Grand Jury discovered that a communication problem exists between the Probation Department and General Services on maintenance requests, project proposals, soft cost estimates, and timely follow up for proposal requests. General Services has many clients to serve including PYSB, but several projects have failed to mature because of both parties’ failure to effectively communicate.

COMMENTS:

The Grand Jury encountered staff members with the PYSB who expressed genuine interest in redirecting young people from destructive behaviors, encouraging positive change, and preparing them to reunite with their families. This effort, when complemented with KernBHRS treatment, allows staff to prepare youth to re-enter their communities.

The closing of DJJ, the aging of the two detention facilities, and the inability to recruit and retain employees places a large financial burden on the PYSB budget. The potential reduction of County general funding along with California’s 2024-2025 \$58 billion **budget deficit** (Legislative Analyst Office, January 15, 2024) negatively impacts their budget. The impact **is real**, and the effect will greatly influence the PYSB with the possibility of reduction in staffing, shuttering facilities, and funding future mental health and substance abuse programs offered to the youthful offender. The PYSB will be forced to trim its budget with limited resources while trying to make a “Dollar out of Fifteen Cents” (Lyrics by Tupac Shakur).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Grand Jury recommends the following to the Kern County Board of Supervisors and the Kern County Probation Department:

- R1. Expedite approval to end the YSO promotional series and create a higher entry salary for newly hired YSOs by October 1, 2024, resulting in a reduction in mandatory overtime. (Finding 1)
- R2. Seek re-consideration for funding approval from the Measure “K” Oversight Committee by January 15, 2025. (Finding 1)
- R3. Use the Probation’s Human Resources Department to create and implement a system by July 1, 2024, for conducting exit interviews when an employee departs the organization. Senior Probation Department staff should review exit interviews quarterly and submit an annual report to the Kern County Human Resources Department. (Finding 2)
- R4. Replace the CEO mental healthcare trailers with new modules. This project should be initiated by July 1, 2024. (Finding 3)
- R5. Purchase a standby electrical generator for JGBJH to operate the potable water system. This work should be completed by November 1, 2024. (Finding 4)
- R6. Repair the damaged roof and water heater on the dormitory at CEO with confirmed pre-approved funding by October 1, 2024. (Finding 5 and 7)
- R7. Repaint the dormitory rooms at JGBJH that have peeling paint by September 1, 2024. (Finding 6)
- R8. Establish quarterly communication meetings between General Services and the Probation Department starting June 1, 2024, to ensure that both departments are working cohesively on all projects and maintenance requests. (Finding 7)

NOTES:

- The Kern County Board of Supervisors and Kern County Probation Department should post a copy of this report where it will be available for public review.
- Persons wishing to receive an email notification of newly released reports may sign up at: www.kerncounty.com/government/other-agencies/grand-jury.
- Present and past Kern County Grand Jury Final Reports and Responses can be accessed on the Kern County Grand Jury website www.kerncounty.com/government/other-agencies/grand-jury.

RESPONSE DEADLINE:

REQUIRED WITHIN 90 DAYS FROM:

- Kern County Board of Supervisors: Findings 1 - 7, Recommendations 1 - 8
- Kern County Probation Department: Findings 1 - 7, Recommendations 1 - 8

RESPONSES ARE REQUIRED PURSUANT TO CAL. PENAL CODE §§933(c) AND 933.05 WITHIN 90 DAYS TO:

**PRESIDING JUDGE
SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF KERN
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 212
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**

**FOREPERSON
KERN COUNTY GRAND JURY
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 600
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**

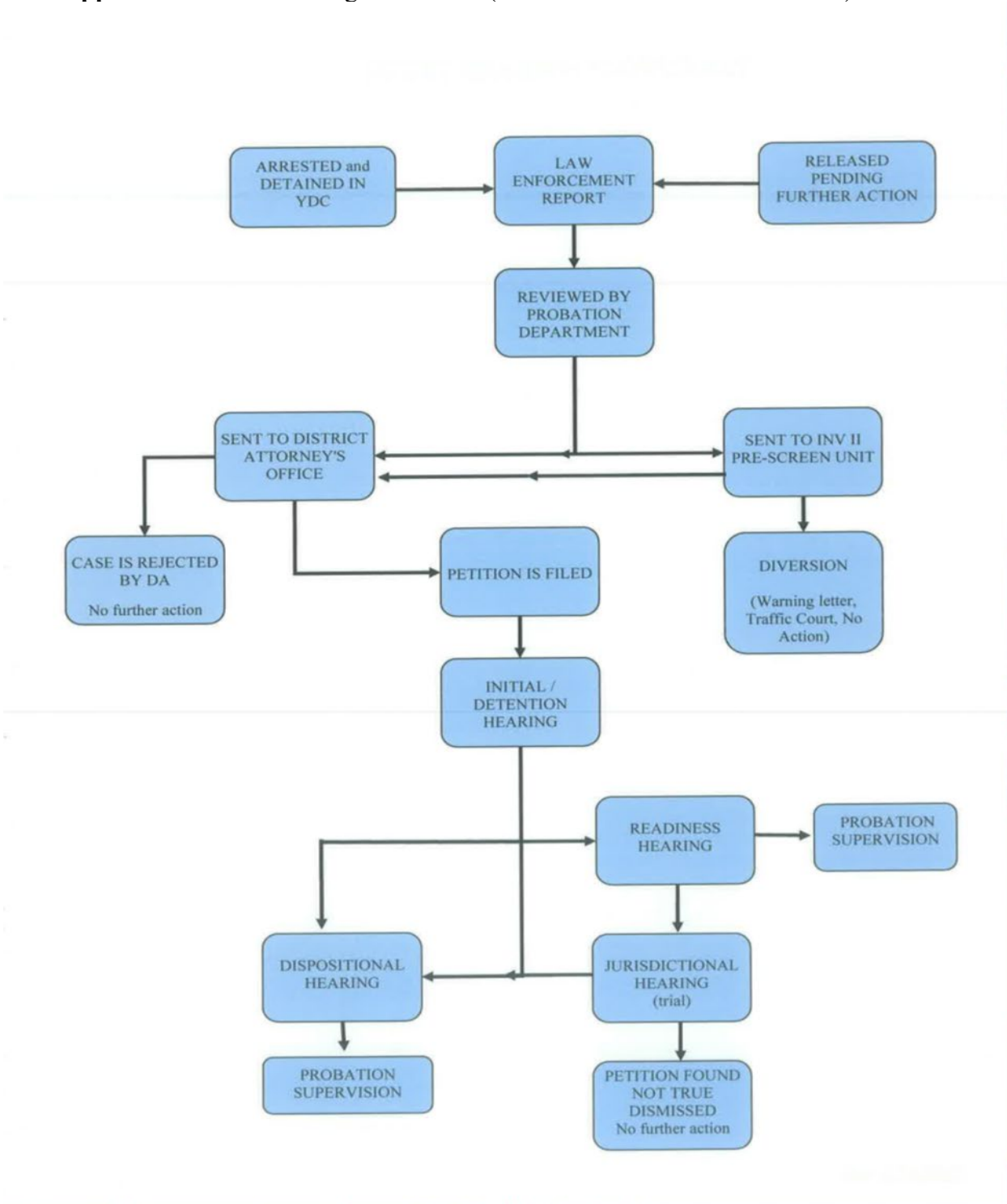
Reports issued by the Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Cal. Penal Code §929 requires that reports of the Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Grand Jury.

LIST OF ACRONYMS:

APEX	Achievement Perseverance and Excellence
ASE	Automotive Services Excellence
BSCC	Board of State and Community Corrections
CCS	College Community Services
CEO	Camp Erwin Owens
COLA	Cost of Living Adjustment
CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
DAO	District Attorney's Office
DJJ	Department of Juvenile Justice
DPO	Deputy Probation Officer
FTR	Furlough Treatment and Rehabilitation
FY	Fiscal Year
HIPAA	Healthcare Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
HVAC	Heating Ventilation Air Conditioning
JGBJH	James G. Bowles Juvenile Hall
JJCPA	Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act
JPPS	Juvenile Probation Psychiatric Services
KCPD	Kern County Probation Department
KCSOS	Kern County Superintendent of Schools
KernBHRS	Kern Behavioral Health and Recovery Services
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
SB	Senate Bill
WIC	Welfare and Institutions Code
YSO	Youth Services Officer

APPENDICES:

Appendix A: Court Hearing Flow Chart (Probation Youth Services Bureau)



Appendix B: Department Objectives Measured (Kern County Probation Department 2023-2024 Approved Annual Budget)

<i>Department Objectives Measured</i>	FY 20-21	FY 21-22	FY 21-22	FY 22-23
	Actual	Target	Estimate	Target
Percentage of youth offenders successfully completing probation	17%	20%	18%	20%
Percentage of youth probationers who have new violations (recidivism rate)	20%	15%	20%	15%
Number of youths on supervised probation	940	1,700	1,100	1,100
Number of probation violation petitions filed	122	200	172	200
Number of referrals to the Probation Department	1,340	2,600	2,191	2,500
Number of investigations for Youth Report	716	1,000	793	1,000
Number of new law violation petitions filed	620	1,100	1077	1,100
Number of home call/field contacts	4,723	9,000	10,199	10,000
Number of arrests	194	400	349	400

As one of our primary objectives this can be accomplished through providing investigation and enforcement services to the Superior Court and by holding youthful offenders accountable for their criminal conduct. Although the Probation Department had seen a decrease in referrals over the last several years, recently those numbers have begun to increase. Field officers continue to spend time in the community, where they are working with youth and their families to redirect negative attitudes and behaviors that would normally result in youth reoffending. Our risk assessment tool continues to aid the community by allowing staff to investigate and subsequently supervise those youth who are deemed moderate/high risk to reoffend. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted protocols and programming; however, operations have returned to a normal standard, referrals increased, field activity increased, and treatment opportunities resumed.

Appendix C: California Probation Department General Fund Percentage for 2023/24
 (Information provided by the Probation Business Managers Association, an Affiliate of the Chief Probation Officers of California)

Percentage of California County Probation Department Budgets that are General Fund
 For FY 2023/24
 Information provided by the Probation Business Managers Association an
 Affiliate of the Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC)

County	%	Overall Average	# of Responding Counties	% of Responding Counties
Siskiyou	94%			
Santa Clara	72%			
Los Angeles	64%			
Napa	63%			
San Francisco-Juvenile**	63%			
Calaveras	62%			
Kings*	62%			
Colusa	60%			
Amador	57%			
El Dorado	57%			
Placer	55%			
Sonoma	47%			
Merced*	46%			
Tehama	46%			
Butte County	45%			
Marin	45%			
San Luis Obispo*	45%			
Plumas	44%			
Ventura	44%			
Santa Barbara	42%			
Humboldt	41%			
Monterey	39%			
Yuba	39%			
Sacramento	38%			
Sutter	36%			
San Diego	34%			
Tulare*	34%			
Lake	33%			
Stanislaus*	30%			
Nevada	29%			
San Benito	29%			
Santa Cruz	28%			
Fresno*	27%			
Kern County*	25%			
Modoc	25%			
San Joaquin*	25%			
Riverside	24%			
Mendocino	23%			
Glenn	18%			
		<u>43%</u>	39	66%

*CPOC Central Valley Region counties

**San Francisco is considered two separate Probation Departments, Juvenile and Adult

Appendix D: Photos



CEO mental health facility (photos provided by CEO staff)



CEO mental health facility (photo provided by CEO staff)



JGBJH Room (photo by the Grand Jury)



JGBJH Room (photo by the Grand Jury)



JGBJH Room (photo by the Grand Jury)



JGBJH mural of Tupac Shakur honoring his poem *"The Rose that grew from concrete"*
(photo by the Grand Jury)



JGBJH mural created by the youth where they are exiting Juvenile Hall and entering Juvenile Court
(photo by the Grand Jury)

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

SUPERVISORS

Phillip Peters District 1
Zack Scrivner..... District 2
Jeff Flores District 3
David R. Couch District 4
Leticia Perez..... District 5



KATHLEEN KRAUSE
CLERK OF BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Kern County Administrative Center
1115 Truxtun Avenue, 5th Floor
Bakersfield, California 93301
Telephone (661) 868-3585
TTY Relay 800-735-2929

May 21, 2024

The Honorable J. Eric Bradshaw, Presiding Judge
Kern County Superior Court
1415 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93301

Dear Judge Bradshaw:

Transmitted herewith is the Board of Supervisors' response to the 2023-2024 Grand Jury's Final Report titled Kern County Probation Department Youth Services Bureau.

The Board of Supervisors appreciates the Grand Jury's review and input.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Couch", is written over a horizontal line.

David Couch, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

EM/SH/COMPL_GJ PROBATION A

Attachment

cc: Grand Jury



May 21, 2024

Board of Supervisors
Kern County Administrative Center
1115 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93301

**PROPOSED RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT TITLED
KERN COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT YOUTH SERVICES BUREAU
Fiscal Impact: None**

The 2023-2024 Grand Jury issued the above titled report that provided the results of an investigation of the Probation Department's Youth Services Bureau's various functions and operations. The Grand Jury examined detention facilities, youth treatment, staffing levels, and the impact of Senate Bill 823, Juvenile Justice Realignment, in Kern County. The Grand Jury commended the dedication and hard work of Probation Department employees. The Youth Services Bureau is responsible for housing, food, education, medical care, treatment, and court appointments of youthful offenders and their return back to the community. Your Board is required by Penal Code §933 to respond to the findings and recommendations of the Grand Jury on matters within its jurisdiction. A proposed response to the Grand Jury's Final Report is attached for your Board's consideration.

Therefore, IT IS RECOMMENDED that your Board approve the response to the 2023-2024 Grand Jury report titled Kern County Probation Department Youth Services Bureau and authorize the Chairman to sign a letter transmitting the Board's response to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court.

Sincerely,

Elsa T. Martinez
Interim Chief Administrative Officer

EM/SH/COMPL_GJ PROBATION

Attachments

cc: Probation Department

Kern County Board of Supervisors
Response to Grand Jury Final Report
Kern County Probation Department – Youth Services Bureau

Response to Findings F1-F7:

Kern County agrees with the Grand Jury’s findings F2, F4, F5, and F7. Kern County partially disagrees with findings F1, F3, and F6. For Finding F1, employee wages are often a central issue in recruitment and retention; however, more information is needed as far as competitiveness with similar positions and possible impacts. Wages are subject to legal requirements for meet and confer with employee representatives and will need to be reviewed in a larger context, including internal and external comparability, compaction issues, available funding, and many other factors. As to Finding 3, while the County agrees the current trailers housing the mental health team at Camp Erwin Owen are aging and in need of replacement, the trailers provide an area for group treatment sessions and individual sessions, as well as office space for mental health staff. The Probation Department has also made temporary alternative spaces available to conduct group and individual sessions with youth to ensure confidentiality pursuant to HIPAA laws. On Finding 6, while the County agrees some rooms are in need of repainting, we do not agree this constitutes a violation of Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) Standards. BSCC conducted inspections of all facilities in June of 2023. In BSCC’s comprehensive inspection report dated January 24, 2024, no areas of noncompliance were noted.

Response to Recommendation:

R1: The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Supervisors and the Probation Department expedite approval to end the Youth Services Officer (YSO) Promotional Series and create a higher salary for newly hired YSOs by October 1, 2024, resulting in a reduction in mandatory overtime.

The recommendation will require further analysis. Terms and conditions of employment are subject to negotiation with designated employee representatives. As the designated negotiators for Kern County, the County Administrative Office and Human Resources Division will examine proposals and make recommendations based on a number of critical factors. The County Administrative Office, Human Resources Division, and the Probation Department will continue conversations to determine the most effective strategies for recruitment and retention of YSOs.

R2: The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Supervisors and the Probation Department seek reconsideration for funding approval from Measure “K” Oversight Committee by January 15, 2025.

The recommendation requires further analysis. Measure “K” is a limited revenue source and approval for funding is dependent on availability. Measure “K” funding was approved for high priority projects and needs. All new Measure “K” funding proposals will be evaluated on the priorities on which the public adopted the sales tax measure, strategic planning to enhance the quality of life for residents and improve operations, and strategic deployment to meet demand of services both short- and long-term. The Probation Department has submitted proposals for Measure “K” funding, which will be considered with other proposals for available funds. Additionally, other funding sources may be available to address needs at the Probation Department, which are assessed through the regular budget process.

R3: The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Supervisors and the Probation Department use its Human Resources Department to create and implement a system by July 1, 2024, for conducting exit interviews when an employee departs the organization. Senior Probation Department staff should review exit interviews quarterly and submit an annual report to the Kern County Human Resources Department.

This recommendation will be implemented, but later than July 1, 2024, due to required analysis. The Probation Department agrees exit interviews would benefit both employees and the department by providing a better understanding of potential barriers to recruitment and retention. The Probation Department is committed to researching meaningful ways to conduct the interviews and submit reports to Kern County Human Resources. Internal protocols will need to be established by the Probation Department. At this point, it is unknown what additional technology and other resources are needed to create effective processes; as such, the anticipated implementation date is January 1, 2025.

R4: The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Supervisors and the Probation Department replace the Camp Erwin Owen (CEO) mental healthcare trailers with new modules. This project should be initiated by July 1, 2024.

This recommendation requires further analysis. With a large number of projects competing for funding, the County continues to look for funding sources for essential services and projects. The County agrees the trailers need to be replaced, once funding sources are identified and secured. Cal-AIM funding from the State is being considered for replacement of a trailer at Camp Erwin Owen and the Probation Department has submitted a proposal for use of Measure "K" funding for a trailer at the James G. Bowles Youth Detention Center.

R5: The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Supervisors and the Probation Department purchase a standby electrical generator for James G. Bowles Juvenile Hall (JGBJH) to operate the potable water system. This work should be completed by November 1, 2024.

The recommendation will be implemented. This project is in the early stages of implementation and is anticipated to be completed in fiscal year 2024-2025. The Board of Supervisors has allocated \$725,000 for this generator project. The project has been established with the General Services Division and work is anticipated to begin in late spring of 2024. During the implementation period, if short term power outages arise, the Probation Department will continue to rent portable generators to power the water pump house. Youth will be provided with bottled water, as has been done in the past.

R6: The Grand Jury recommends that the department and the Board of Supervisors repair the damaged roof and water heater on the dormitory at CEO with confirmed pre-approved funding by October 1, 2024.

The recommendation will be implemented. Funding was approved by the Board on November 28, 2023, and the project is anticipated to be completed in the fiscal year 2024-25. The Probation Department and the General Services Division have initiated the project and contractors have already removed the old, damaged equipment in preparation for installation of the new boiler/HVAC units.

R7: The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Supervisors and the Probation Department repaint the dormitory rooms at JGBJH that have peeling paint by September 1, 2024.

This recommendation will be implemented. Repainting rooms is an ongoing process and is typically handled internally by the Probation Department. As staffing allows, the Probation Department plans to paint the rooms during the installation of new security doors, which began in April 2024.

R8: The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Supervisors and the Probation Department establish quarterly communication meetings between General Services and the Probation Department starting June 1, 2024, to ensure that both departments are working cohesively on all projects and maintenance requests.

The recommendation will be implemented. The Probation and General Services departments are both committed to establishing scheduled quarterly meetings to discuss maintenance requests, project proposals and updates, cost estimates, and other subjects to complete projects timely and effectively.

