



CHILD AND FAMILY STRENGTHENING ADVISORY BOARD

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



PRIMARY AND SECONDARY TRAUMATIC STRESS

Enhance reflective supervision and ensure it is conducted in a private setting with greater emphasis on addressing case-related issues and worker needs as opposed to tasks. (25)



COMPLETED

In November 2020, CWS published new Staff Expectations files for PSW, SPSW, PSS, and PSPM.

These files outline the requirements for regular supervision and the use of a standard form which covers administrative, educational, and supportive supervision areas.



PRIMARY AND SECONDARY TRAUMATIC STRESS

Enhance manager-level training on STS, conflict resolution, and stress management. (7)



COMPLETED - ONGOING

CE-CERT overview trainings were provided from mid to late January to supervisors, managers, and executive leadership who are in the pilot group.

Staff psychologists are training on improving sleep, setting boundaries, communication skills, in addition to other resiliency building techniques.

CWS developed an onboarding curriculum for newly promoted managers to ensure consistency and support.

We added executive level coaching for managers which reflects and meets the diverse needs of the leadership team.



CAPACITY TO OPERATE WITHIN A TRAUMA-INFORMED LENS

Conduct a thorough analysis that includes a review of PSW and supervisor competencies that correlate with trauma-informed practices. (13)



COMPLETED

SET Redevelopment Team added trauma-informed practices into behaviors, including looking at the Trauma-Informed Code of Conduct.

For example:

- Ensure needs are met with an appropriate level of urgency, prioritization, and follow-through
- Utilize a process to provide constructive feedback to the organization and ensure steps are taken for improvement when appropriate



ENHANCE CASEWORKER ONBOARDING, TRAINING, AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

Establish a designated training facility to improve ease of access to in-person training and continuing education opportunities. (18)



COMPLETED

Virtual training has been successful and we are looking at adopting this as a model into the future.

CWS will continue to investigate whether a designated in-person training facility is needed in the future.



WORKLOAD ISSUES AND QUALITY OF PROTECTIVE SERVICES WORKER CONTACTS

Follow the Structured Decision Making (SDM) contact guidelines to increase monthly visits for families at higher levels of risk. (4 and 10)



COMPLETED

Policy has reviewed and revised contact guidelines for each program

Program	Contacts Required
ER	If closing a referral: 1 per 30 day investigation period If opening a referral: 3 in first 30 days OR 2 in first 21 days if the Case Plan is approved in the first 21 calendar days after the initial removal of the child or in-person response, whichever is earlier
VS	Minimum of 2 per month, with 4 being recommended First contact must be within 5 days of assignment
CS	Minimum of 1 per month



KIM JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

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GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

Kim Giardina, DSW
Director, Child Welfare Services
1600 Pacific Highway
San Diego, CA 92101

**SUBJECT: NOTICE OF TERMINATION OF SAN PASQUAL ACADEMY (SPA)
PILOT PROGRAM EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2021**

Dear Dr. Giardina:

This letter is written to provide notification of the termination of the San Pasqual Academy (SPA) Pilot Program, effective October 1, 2021.

On October 2019, San Diego County (the County) and California Department of Social Services (CDSS) executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that allowed New Alternatives to operate an educationally based residential program called the SPA Pilot Program.

As you are aware, AB 403 (Chapter 773, Statutes of 2015) codified the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) Act, which advances California's goal of reducing the use of long-term congregated care programs by emphasizing the importance youth residing in family settings. In situations in which the youth may need structure to heal from trauma or stabilize a crisis, residential programs were designed to be short-term with intensive integrated mental health services. The AB 403 eliminated the use of licensed group homes as a placement option for foster youth. Given SPA's decision not to convert to a short term residential therapeutic program (STRTP) or any other licensing category available to foster youth, its educationally based residential program would have become unsustainable for foster care under CCR.

However, when AB 403 was signed into law, the California legislature included an uncodified section which permitted SPA to continue as a pilot for a residential educationally based model of care under specified conditions. Section 121 of AB 403 states that "notwithstanding the provisions of this act, on and after January 1, 2017, facilities with licensed capacity of 184 that were in operation prior to January 1, 2015, that offer placements for the purpose of attending an onsite high school, may continue to operate under an appropriate licensing category determined by CDSS as long as those facilities submit to the Department a transition plan describing how the program will comply with the provisions of this act, pursuant to a timeframe to be determined with the department." The SPA Pilot was never intended to be a substitute for an STRTP. Rather, it was established to test out a model that centered around the concept of

creating a living community of support, while advancing relational permanency and promoting educational achievement.

The MOU for SPA provides its term “shall be from December 1, 2018, through December 2021, unless terminated earlier by operation of effect of federal or state law.” The MOU specifically anticipates an impact on the term resulting from the implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) Public Law 115-123 and provides for CDSS and the County to “jointly examine the viability and financial impact of FFPSA, of continuing the Pilot Program through the end of the term.” The MOU acknowledges that the implementation of the FFPSA will impact the ability to draw down Title IV-E funding should it be implemented by the State and provides for an amendment or termination of the MOU prior to the end of the term. Furthermore, the MOU provides that either CDSS or the County has the “right to terminate the MOU upon sixty (60) days prior written notice to the other.”

The California legislature is implementing FFPSA effective October 1, 2021. Conversations between the County and CDSS have determined that federal funding for the pilot will be unavailable following the implementation of FFPSA. Given the overall reduction in the county’s foster care population and the very limited number of appropriate referrals, it appears that continuation of the pilot is no longer viable or prudent. Therefore, the MOU is hereby terminated effective October 1, 2021. While only 60 days’ notice of termination is required under the MOU, CDSS is providing notice at this time to provide the County additional time to transition the foster youth participating in the pilot into suitable placements.

If you have any questions regarding this action, please do not hesitate to contact Cheryl Treadwell at 916-651-9152 or by email at cheryl.treadwell@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Gregory E. Rose
Deputy Director

c: Diana Boyer, CWDA
Julie Ann Queijo, CCLD
Jaynetta Christian, CalWin

bc: M. Ford
H. Afiff (provider has other programs) F. Polk-Reaves
C. Coleman
M. Ezslinger
C. Fang
B. Griffin - Case file (2)

San Pasqual Academy

Planning Document

Overview

- The County Child Welfare Services was notified on February 8, 2021 by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) that San Pasqual Academy (SPA) pilot program will terminate effective October 2021.
- As of October 1, 2021, SPA will not meet the federal requirements under the Family First Prevention Services Act. As such, SPA will no longer be eligible for Federal funding to operate. Federal funding covers about 24% of the SPA budget.
- Due to the significant changes in state and federal policy around the use of congregate care settings, the significant decrease in foster youth population overall, especially of those requiring long-term high level of care, and the loss of federal funding it has been determined by the state and county that SPA is no longer a viable placement option for teens in foster care in San Diego County.
- As reflected in the September 2020 mid-term evaluation of SPA, the collective impact of the programming and support services has resulted in positive outcomes for former residents, and we are committed to redirecting the extraordinary resources and energy toward making the SPA Promise a reality for all foster teens throughout San Diego County.

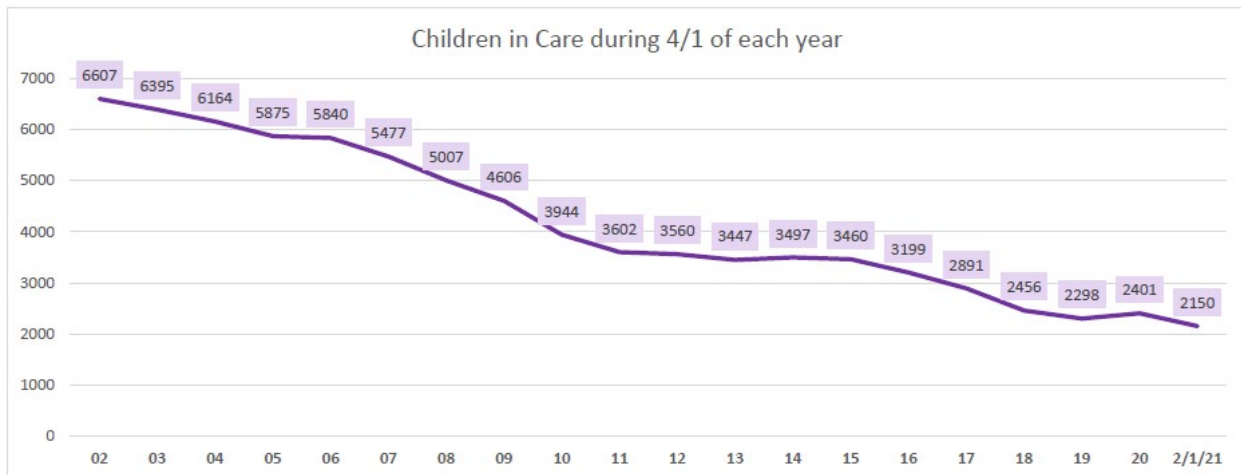
Continuum of Care Reform

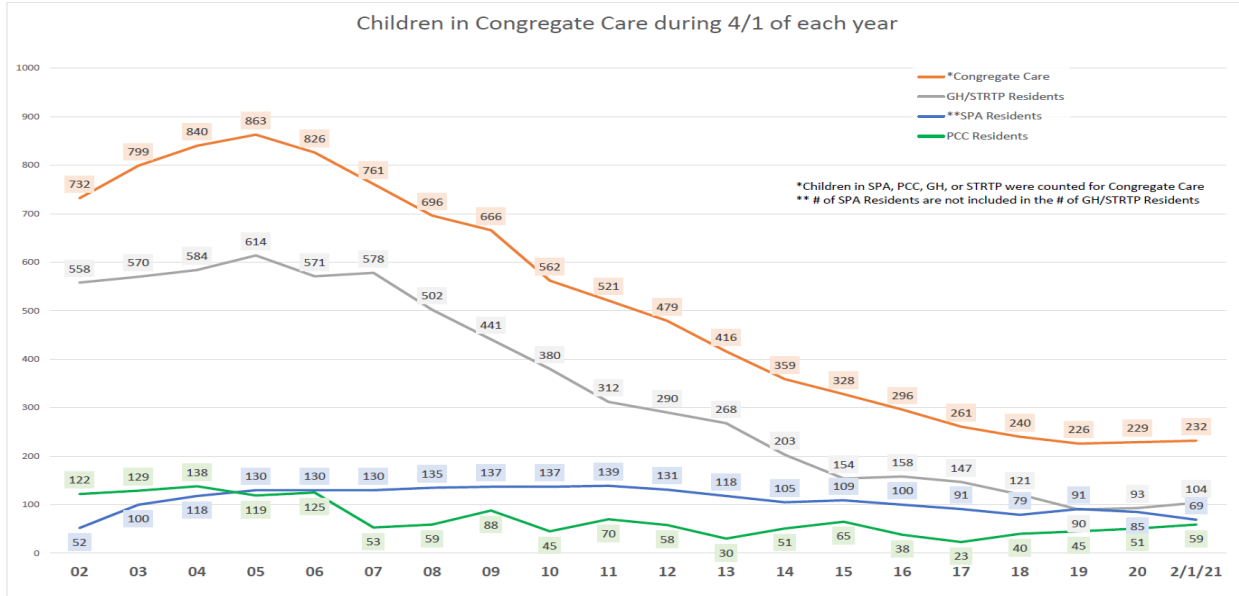
- Over the past 10 years, Federal and State legislation, as well as policy established through litigation, have shifted the statutory requirements for keeping children safely with families.
- Enacted in 2015 and implemented in 2017, Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) legislation requires child welfare to maintain children in family setting and reduce the use of congregate care.
- CCR's goals are to:
 - reduce the use of congregate care placement settings,
 - increase the use of home-based family care, and
 - decrease the length of time to achieve permanency.
- Through CCR, group homes are required to shift and become Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTP).
- Youth are only to be placed in an STRTP if they have mental health needs that require high level of treatment.
- Eligible youth can only remain in an STRTP for 6 months, unless their mental health needs require longer treatment.
- The Child Welfare Director must approve all STRTP placements and approve any stays longer than 6 months.
- As part of CCR, SPA was approved as a three-year Pilot Project to continue operating through an MOU with the CDSS, which outlines how SPA will promote the principles of CCR and conduct an evaluation of the model.
- An MOU between the County of San Diego (COSD), New Alternatives, and CDSS is currently in place from 12/1/18 – 12/31/21.
- County of San Diego (COSD) and New Alternatives have partnered to conduct an evaluation of SPA and that evaluation is currently in process.
- CDSS will not allow SPA to operate as a pilot project after 10/01/21.

Changes to Child Welfare Services

Population of Youth in Care (December 2020)

- 2,077 children ages 0-17 in out of home care
- 594 youth ages 11-17 are in out of home care
- 33% (695) placed with relatives
- 56% (1156) in foster homes
- 5% (100) in STRTPs
- 3% (71) at SPA
- 3% (55) at Polinsky Childrens Center or other placement types
- San Diego County has experienced a 39% reduction in the number of children in foster care over the last 10 years and a 59% reduction over the last 15 years.
- As a result of the changes with Continuum of Care Reform and other systems changes, San Diego has reduced the number of children in group home/STRTP settings (excluding San Pasqual Academy) by 63% over the past 10 years.





Vision for Child Welfare Services

As we look ahead to changes that are happening within the systems of care for children and youth, it is important to consider national best practices happening in child welfare. In September 2020, the Children’s Bureau, a division of the U.S Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families, issued a national call to action to “fundamentally rethink how child welfare systems function to prioritize strengthening families and building resiliency, rather than separating families.” The Children’s Bureau has partnered with Casey Family Programs, Annie E. Casey Foundation, and Prevent Child Abuse America to work with jurisdictions to transition from child protection systems to child well-being systems.

On February 9, 2018, the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) was signed into law as part of Public Law (P.L.) 115-123. FFPSA provides San Diego with an opportunity to more heavily invest in robust family strengthening and child maltreatment prevention efforts. For the first time, Title IV-E funding can be utilized to fund mental health, substance abuse, and in-home parenting prevention services for children and their families at risk of entering foster care. Additionally, FFPSA requires reduced reliance on congregate care settings and more focus on placing children with families.

Prevention services provided under FFPSA must be approved by the Federal Clearinghouse. Based on what has been approved so far, San Diego is in a good position to expand upon already existing evidence-based practices to enhance our array of services available to families. San Diego has already implemented 12 of the approved programs, allowing us the ability to immediately leverage FFPSA funding starting in October 2021. Beginning in 2018, following a statewide Prevention Summit, San Diego developed the Partners in Prevention coalition. The Partners in Prevention coalition began to develop a strong network of child maltreatment partners through the Community Collaborations grant received last year from the Administration for Children and Families. The focus of the Partners in Prevention work is to bring together

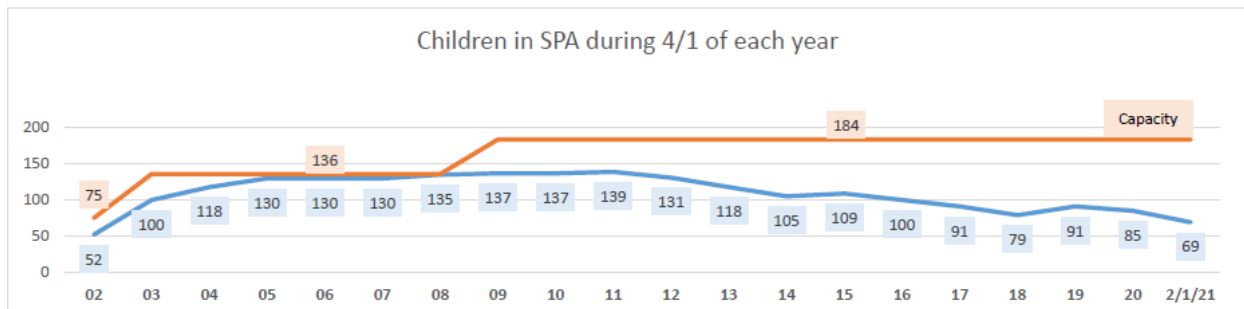
a broad group of stakeholders “to enhance and expand a *continuum of prevention strategies* and activities, *increase capacity* to provide coordinated support services for children ages 0-5 and their caregivers, provide *Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation* to families with children ages 0-5, and facilitate *input from persons with lived experience* early and often, conduct rigorous *evaluation and continuous quality improvement*.”

Transforming our system into a child well-being system from a child-protection system will require several components:

- Proactively supporting child and family well-being and preventing child maltreatment and unnecessary family separation
- Creating intentional, coordinated investments in a full continuum of prevention and robust community-based networks of support
- Further developing anti-racist policies and practices to ensure equity and positive outcomes for all children and families
- Utilizing foster care as a temporary support to families, not a substitute for them

We can leverage this child-welfare transformation opportunity to make changes to SPA to further support the effort in becoming a child well-being system.

Current Population of Youth in San Pasqual Academy (02/10/21)



San Pasqual Academy Youth

- 71 youth (38 identify as male; 33 identify as female)
 - Includes 1 Riverside County youth
- School Enrollment
 - 11 Middle School Students
 - 59 High School Students
 - 52 On-Site High School
 - 7 Off-Site High School
 - 1 Graduate (moving to transitional housing on 03/04/21)
- High School Seniors (verification for Class of 2021 graduation pending)
 - On-Site High School – 1
 - Off Site High School – 14

San Pasqual Academy

- San Pasqual Academy (SPA), which opened in 2001 as a first-in-the-nation residential education campus designed specifically for foster youth, serves as a placement option for dependents of the Juvenile Court, 12-17 years old, and Non-Minor Dependents (NMDs) up to age 19 years old.
- SPA provides a comprehensive support system for the youth, including a stable placement, an individualized education, independent living skills training, therapeutic services, work readiness training, extra-curricular and enrichment activities, family connections and relational permanency.
- Additional support is offered by the intergenerational mentoring (aka grandparent) program and availability of alumni housing and after care services create the space SPA youth call “home.”
- SPA has a licensed capacity for 184 youth and a current population of 71 youth.
- The youth originally identified and placed at the SPA were high school age youth, unlikely to return home, and in a long-term foster care situation. These youth did not find a fit in a foster home and did not require the intensive treatment of a higher-level group home.
- Over time, SPA has accommodated the changing needs of our foster care population by considering for placement:
 - youth in middle school to keep sibling groups together,
 - youth in active family reunification cases,
 - youth in dual status cases,
 - youth with low level offenses active to probation,
 - youth from neighboring counties.

Currently, 25% of youth at SPA are in family reunification cases, working toward going home to their families.

SPA History of Referrals

- **Child Welfare Services**
 - 2017-18: 119 referrals, 53 accepted
 - 2018-19: 135 referrals, 40 accepted, and 35 placed
 - 2019-20: 135 referrals, 40 accepted, 35 placed
 - FY 20-21 (as of 02/19/21) 90 referrals, 28 accepted, 24 placed, 6 pending
- **Juvenile Probation**
 - 2018: 25 referrals, 4 accepted, 21 declined/no action
 - 2019: 13 referrals, 2 accepted, 11 declined
 - 2020: 6 referrals, 1 accepted, 5 declined

San Pasqual Promise (DRAFT)

As we look toward transforming our child welfare system, *how can we take what we have learned at San Pasqual Academy and apply that to all youth, ages 12 and older, in care supporting efforts to utilize foster care as a support to families, not as a substitute?*

Several components are necessary to provide these opportunities to all youth in care:

- **Enhanced focus on educational supports for all foster youth ages 12 and over**
 - San Diego County Office of Education partnerships
 - Expand Fostering Academic Success in Education to serve more youth
 - # of school age youth 12 and older - 868
 - Operational needs – evaluation, student assessments
 - Propose a 3-year timeline for expansion

- **Expand Independent Living Skills and job readiness and internships and employment opportunities to youth ages 12 and older**
 - Enhanced Independent Living Skills (ILS)
 - Increase in ILS contract
 - Serve youth ages 12-21
 - Utilize Casey Life Skills Assessment
 - Workforce Partnership – utilize existing funding for SPA with all youth
 - Outdoor Outreach

- **Support placement stability for youth in family settings**
 - Better serve high needs youth by expanding Therapeutic Foster Care and Intensive Services Foster Care homes
 - Integration with Regional Center, San Diego County Office of Education, Behavioral Health Services
 - Support for both relative and recruited families through increased education and training with Grossmont College
 - Increased respite for resource families
 - More support for increasing opportunities of extracurricular activities for youth

- **Provide supports for youth in aftercare**
 - Life Skills Coach pilot
 - Scholarships

Current SPA Funding

As a three-year Pilot Program, CDSS authorized the County to continue to utilize SPA as an eligible foster care placement for youth under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court and supervised by the County's child welfare services or probation department. In addition, the Pilot Program status makes available to the County the federal share of foster care funds for the care and supervision of the youth suitably placed at SPA. Also, several partners including San Diego County Office of Education and the San Diego Workforce Partnership have their own funding stream to support their program component on campus. Once the pilot is terminated, per CDSS, state and federal funds will no longer be eligible to be drawn down to support foster youth at this placement.

CWS - San Pasqual Academy Fiscal Year 20-21 Academy Budget and spending projections if SPA is not in operation *(captures costs to continue supporting youth in alternative placements)*

FY 2020-21 SPA BUDGET		
Expenditures (Exp)	BUDGET	SPA Not operating
Salary and Benefits	1,332,528	1,241,705
Services and Supplies	1,547,687	105,986
Total S&B/S&S	2,880,215	1,347,691
Foster Care Assistance Payments	8,127,840	5,100,600
Total within CWS	11,008,055	6,448,291
Mental Health Day Treatment (BHS)	2,500,000	
Facilities	465,000	
Total Outside of CWS	2,965,000	-
TOTAL SPA (Including cost outside of CWS)	13,973,055	6,448,291
Revenue		
Federal*	5,947,417	934,810
<i>Title XIX</i>	<i>1,250,000</i>	
<i>Title IV-E</i>	<i>4,697,417</i>	<i>934,810</i>
<i>CARES ACT</i>	-	
State - MHSA		
County	7,344,428	4,984,004
Orange Grove	681,211	529,477
Total Revenue	13,973,055	6,448,291

Proposed Timeline and Immediate Next Steps

- February
 - Meeting with New Alternatives, County Office of Education, and Workforce Partnership
 - Meeting with SPA Advisory Board
 - Meeting with SPA stakeholders
 - Outline long-term vision for CWS and SPA Promise
 - Planning Committee on Reorientation toward Strengthening Families Strategy & Ensuring Success by Mobilizing SPA Promise for Teen Foster Youth (include youth) – discuss conference to seek more input.
 - Engage youth placed at SPA in conversations about the upcoming changes
 - Continue to engage additional partners to developing ways to bring opportunities to all foster youth
- March
 - Meeting with Child and Family Strengthening Advisory Board (CFSAB)
 - On-going planning and promotion of conference
 - Focus on grades 11 and under
 - Allow 12th graders to finish their year and graduate
 - Start to identify ideas for housing options for grandparents and alumni foster youth
- April/May
 - Hold Conference to engage stakeholders in conversations about family strengthening and supporting foster youth
- July
 - Transition 12th graders to aftercare placements
- October/December
 - Goal to have all kids moved from SPA

Next Steps

- Set up meeting with New Alternatives, San Diego County Office of Education, and Workforce Partnership to discuss possible changes at SPA
- Determine what supports New Alternatives will need to sustain placements of youth while changes to SPA are occurring
- Set March CFSAB agenda item to discuss SPA changes
- Discuss transition plan with youth and alumni