

Board Meeting Psychologist Report
December 14, 2020
Hesperia campus

Providing Targeted, Specialized Support and Services at School

We continue our commitment to educate students with disabilities, to the maximum extent appropriate, in the general education classroom setting. For students that demonstrate the need for more support we provide special education and related services such as specially designed academic instruction in a separate setting, assistive technology, speech & language services, occupational therapy, Educationally Related Mental Health Services, and adaptive physical education.

On August 24, 2020, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) issued Guidance Related to Cohorts (Cohorting Guidance), which sets minimum health and safety guidelines across multiple sectors serving youth, including childcare and schools (public and private). CDPH issued the Cohorting Guidance regarding permissible small-group in- person services. The Cohorting Guidance authorizes small-group, in-person services in controlled, supervised, and indoor environments, such as those operated by local educational agencies (LEAs). The Cohorting Guidance applies to schools that cannot reopen for in- person instruction pursuant to the July 17 Framework.

The CDPH guidance enables schools to provide supervision and care for students, including specialized services for students with disabilities and English learners, access to internet and devices for distance learning, and in-person support for at-risk and high- need students. Any adult assigned to work with students must observe appropriate precautions to prevent transmission, including wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

Cohorts are stable groups of students with no more than 16 individuals, who are meeting for targeted supports and intervention services, under the direction of the LEA, while the school is closed to in person instruction and in addition to distance learning.

In-person targeted, specialized support and services in stable cohorts is permissible when the school is able to satisfy all of the conditions detailed in the Cohorting Guidance, including:

- Limiting cohort size
- Restricting cohort mixing
- Maintaining proper physical distancing, masking, cleaning and other safety measures

Encore currently has two cohort groups on campus. The middle school cohort which serves students in grades 7-8 has approximately 13 students and three adults: 1 full-time special education teacher; one full-time and one 6-hour special education paraprofessional. The middle

school cohort meets on campus each Monday and Wednesday from 8:00-11:00am. The high school cohort meets each Tuesday and Thursday from 12:00-3:00pm, and currently services approximately 12 students while staffed with two adults and three adults: 1 full-time special education teacher; one full-time and one 6-hour special education paraprofessional.

Staff who are providing specialized services or targeted support – such as speech, occupational or physical therapy, or Educationally Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS) must be done individually if provided in person or using groups via a video conferencing platform.

The following services are provided by the Desert Mountain Charter Special Education Local Planning Area (DMC/SELPA) and the Desert Mountain Children’s Center (DMCC)

- Adaptive Physical Education (APE)
- Educationally Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS)
- Occupational Therapy (OT)
- Physical Therapy (PT)

This is Encore’s 3rd year contracting with PresenceLearning, a non-public agency (NPA), to provide speech/language services via teletherapy.