



MEDIA STATEMENT – Updated June 2024

Provo Canyon School was sold by its previous ownership in August 2000. We therefore cannot comment on the operations or student experience prior to that time.

What we can say is that the school provides a structured environment teaching life-skills, providing behavioral health therapy, and continuing education for youth who come to us with pre-existing and complex emotional, behavioral and psychiatric needs. These youth have not been successful in typical home and school environments, and in many cases have a history of engaging in dangerous behaviors such as self-harming and/or attempting suicide, physical violence and/or aggression toward others, and use of illicit substances.

While we acknowledge there are individuals over the many years who believe they were not helped by the program, we are heartened by the many stories former residents share about how their stay was a pivot point in improving – and in many cases, saving – their lives.

Provo Canyon School today is an intensive, psychiatric residential treatment center for boys (ages 12 through 17 years old) and girls (ages 13 through 17). We offer innovative, evidence-based therapeutic interventions, academic instruction and life-skills training tailored to the needs of each of our students. Our treatment is holistic in nature—and supports wellness strategies including education, physical activity, nutritious foods and appropriate structured outdoor time.

Over the last two decades, mental health treatment has evolved from a behaviors-based foundation to a personalized, trauma-informed approach. We work with extremely complex individuals who often present a danger to themselves and others. Provo Canyon School is committed to the safety of our students and staff. Provo Canyon School DOES NOT use “solitary confinement” as a form of intervention. Licensed physicians prescribe medication as necessary to assist residents in addressing their mental health related diagnoses. The students and their families are informed of changes to prescription medications and participate in decision-making about medications. All medication changes have to have prior approval by the parents or legal guardian. Provo Canyon School physicians DO NOT prescribe or use any medication as a means of discipline. The infrequent use of medications to assist a student in gaining control is within the standard of care and the requirements in Utah code. We do not use medication to sedate, render a student immobile or restrict them in their ability to continue to engage actively in their care.

Provo Canyon School provides every student with a survey upon discharge that rates their overall experience and provides the facility with feedback. **Out of 2,139 discharged students from Provo Canyon School between January 2018 – May 2024, 86% responded to the survey, providing a score of 4.79 out of 5 overall on the student satisfaction rating scale.**

In 2018, Student Satisfaction Survey Results reported:

- 99.7% of students report that they feel better at discharge than when admitted
- 99.1% of students report that overall they were very satisfied with their treatment
- 97.8% of students report that they would recommend the facility to someone needing treatment
- 99.4% of students report that they felt safe while they were there
- 99.4% of students report that they were treated with dignity and respect

In 2019, Student Satisfaction Survey Results reported:

- 99.2% of students report that they feel better at discharge than when admitted
- 98.9% of students report that overall they were very satisfied with their treatment
- 98.2% of students report that they would recommend the facility to someone needing treatment
- 99.2% of student report that they felt safe while they were there
- 99.2% of students report that they were treated with dignity and respect

In 2020, Student Satisfaction Survey Results reported:

- 99.7% of students report that they feel better at discharge than when admitted
- 100% of students report that overall they were very satisfied with their treatment
- 100% of students report that they felt safe while they were there
- 98.4% of student report that they were treated with dignity and respect

In 2021, Student Satisfaction Survey Results reported:

- 100% of students report that they feel better at discharge than when admitted
- 100% of students report that overall they were very satisfied with my treatment
- 99.7% of students report that they felt safe while they were there
- 100% of students report that they were treated with dignity and respect

In 2022, Student Satisfaction Survey Results:

- 100% of students report that they feel better at discharge than when admitted
- 100% of students report that overall they were very satisfied with my treatment
- 98.1% of students report that they felt safe while they were there
- 97.7% of students report that they were treated with dignity and respect

In 2023, Student Satisfaction Survey Results:

- 99.5% of students report that they feel better at discharge than when admitted
- 97.7% of students report that overall they were very satisfied with my treatment
- 94.6% of students report that they felt safe while they were there
- 96.0% of students report that they were treated with dignity and respect

Provo Canyon School is highly regulated by multiple agencies and organizations. Provo Canyon School is licensed by the State of Utah, Department of Human Services; it is accredited by The Joint Commission (national accreditation of health care organizations including psychiatric residential treatment centers) and Cognia for academic services. On average, our facility receives 20-30 independent on-site audits annually by highly qualified, professional auditors. We are required by law and contract to report any significant, negative finding to all our regulatory agencies to which we are responsible, as well as required by contract to report to all funding agencies.

We do not condone or promote any form of abuse. Any and all alleged/suspected abuse is reported immediately to our state regulatory authorities, law enforcement and Child Protective Services, as required. We are committed to providing high-quality care to youth with special, and often complex, emotional, behavioral and psychiatric needs.

We are concerned that the current media coverage may increase the stigma around seeking help for behavioral health concerns. This would be a disservice if it leads people away from seeking necessary care and increases the stigma around mental health that providers, organizations, advocates and members of the public have worked so hard – and made much progress over the years – to break.

Thousands of youth with behavioral health issues have been helped over the years at Provo Canyon School. Although the vast majority of students report benefiting from the care they received at Provo Canyon School, occasionally some students do not believe their treatment was successful. We cannot comment on individuals' treatment, care or allegations due to privacy laws – but will reiterate that we are committed to providing high-quality care in a compassionate, safe environment. Ultimately, the value our clinicians and staff provide is evidenced by their ability to improve and save lives.

As related to recent legislation, Provo Canyon School is in support of Utah Senate Bill 127. We are supportive of the additional transparency the legislation requires. As always, our singular goal is student safety. As a matter of policy and procedure, we have always operated within the requirements of our reporting obligations.

Leadership and staff of Provo Canyon School are highly committed to providing effective treatment, compassionate care and a nurturing environment for the students and families we serve. We welcome collaborative discussion, change and opportunity to enhance the care and services provided in our level of residential care. We seek to be transparent in our operations and practices as far as it also ensures the rights, respect and dignity of the students we treat.

Comments from a Staff Member:

I have worked for Provo Canyon School (PCS) for over 20 years in a variety of roles. I love coming to work every day because I feel like my efforts at work make a big difference to my students and impact society in a positive way. I am happy that we at PCS see each student as a whole person and strive to help them address issues in all aspects of their lives. I appreciate that PCS fosters a spirit of teamwork among employees. I have developed many cherished friendships at work over the years and I value the day-to-day interactions I have had with both staff and students. My experiences at Provo Canyon School have greatly impacted the man I have become and I am grateful. - MC

For more information, please visit: <https://provocanyon.com>.