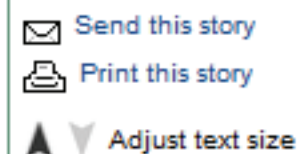


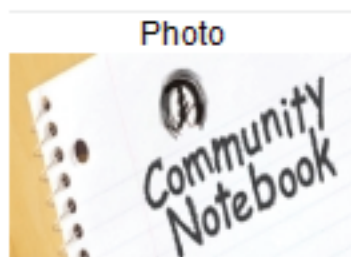
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Sand Hill School serves struggling early learners

New private school in Palo Alto helps students with social and attention difficulties

by Sarah Trauben
Palo Alto Online Staff



Photo

Sand Hill School, a new private school for struggling students in kindergarten through third grade, concluded its first week of operation Friday (Feb. 4).



Located at 650 Clark Way in Palo Alto and run by the Children's Health Council, the early-intervention program provides small classrooms and individualized teaching strategies to help students with social and attention difficulties before they can get traditional diagnoses when they begin to read.

"They don't need a label to get the help they need," Children's Health Council Community Manager Kim Acker said.

Sand Hill School has three classrooms and six students, with a combined kindergarten and first grade. As it grows to four classrooms, there will be a maximum of 12 students per classroom and a 6:1 student-teacher ratio.

Students will also have access to art therapists, psychologists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists and more.

Acker said one student's mother had already sent a note thanking the teacher, saying it was a pleasant change that her child was returning home from school each day happy.

"Kids are influenced by how other children and adults see them. If they're given a negative message, they start getting discouraged. It's important to get to kids at that stage when their self-esteem is vulnerable, before it's squashed and it becomes very hard to reach them," Acker said.

Acker predicted a majority of Sand Hill students would be prepared to transition into traditional schools after going through the program.

"The school's promise is that when kids feel good about themselves and are given the right kinds of attention, they go on to great things," Acker said.

For more information, visit the [Sand Hill School website](#).

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