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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ventura County Civil Grand Jury Announces Release of Report on Oversight of Charter Schools Authorized by Ventura County School Districts and the Ventura County Office of Education

The 2019-2020 Ventura County Civil Grand Jury investigated five school districts and the Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE) regarding policies, practices and procedures in providing oversight of charter schools.

The Grand Jury concluded that, while the authorizing districts and VCOE are following state law in reporting fiscal and administrative information, there is no consistency in report monitoring and oversight of charter schools.

The Grand Jury also concluded that, while the VCOE provides training to charter school staff, no ongoing training is offered to the authorizing school districts.

The Grand Jury also concluded that comprehensive guidelines for monitoring of charter schools have been developed by a California advisory organization, Fiscal Crisis Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) and VCOE. These guidelines would be of benefit in developing charter school operations and procedures, however they have not been adopted by any Ventura County school district.

The Grand Jury further concluded that each charter school's operation would benefit by having an official representative of the authorizing district or VCOE on its governing board.

The Grand Jury recommends that VCOE collaborate with charter schools and district authorizers to review and enhance the current VCOE oversight checklist/timeline utilizing the FCMAT guidelines.

The Grand Jury also recommends that VCOE consult with each authorizing school district, or provide a seminar for all authorizing school districts, to establish a common set of oversight guidelines.

The Grand Jury also recommends that each existing charter school have on its governing board at least one official representative from the authorizing district or VCOE.

The Grand Jury further recommends that each charter school authorizing entity require that future charter school petitions for authorization include an agreement that the charter school will have a representative from the authorizing school district and/or VCOE on its governing board.

The public is invited to review the entire report at <https://www.ventura.org/grand-jury/fiscal-year-2019-2020/> in the Annual Reports tab in "Fiscal Year 2019-2020."

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