

Santa Paula Union High School District Bond Election Measure "A"

REASON FOR INVESTIGATION

The Grand Jury received a citizens' complaint #95-17 asking for an evaluation of the Santa Paula Union High School District Bond Initiative to determine if the money was spent according to the wishes of the voters.

BACKGROUND

The voters within the Santa Paula Union High School District passed Measure "A" June 5, 1990. This was a \$5,000,000 bond issue for rehabilitating, improving, expanding and remodeling facilities owned by Santa Paula Union High School District including improvements to heating, air conditioning, plumbing, irrigation, roofing, asphalt pavement, removal of asbestos from school buildings or such other capital needs as deemed necessary.

PROCEDURES FOLLOWED

- Interviewed complainants to receive more data on this matter.
- Interviewed members of the School Board including the President.
- Interviewed School Superintendent.
- Interviewed a former Vice-Principal.
- Toured school facilities.
- Examined extensively all documents involved, such as:
 - a. The Santa Paula Union High School District Public Opinion Survey, dated January 1990.
 - b. School Board minutes authorizing sale of bonds.
 - c. Resolution #90-14 authorizing sale of bonds.
 - d. Resolution #90-15 establishing Building Fund.
 - e. Resolution #90-16 establishing Bond Interest and Redemption Fund.
 - f. Dates of construction meetings.
 - g. Legal opinions regarding expenditures of bond funds.
 - h. Bond funds identification.
 - i. State funds identification.
 - j. Certified copies of outside auditors' reports regarding bond fund expenditures for fiscal years 1993 and 1994.
 - k. Certified copies of State Auditors' reports for fiscal years of 1991 and 1994.
 - l. Santa Paula Union High School Bond Measure "A" Initiative.

FINDINGS

- Santa Paula Union High School District Public Opinion Survey supported the bond initiative.
- Complainants believed the bond funds were to be used for renovation of older school buildings only.
- Complainants did not understand that funds would be used to purchase additional buildings for administration use.
- School Board minutes show proper authorization for sale of the bonds.
- Resolution #90-14 properly authorized sale of bonds.
- Resolution #90-15 properly established Building Fund.
- Resolution #90-16 properly established Bond Interest and Redemption Fund.
- The School Board applied for \$3,000,000 from the State School Lease Purchase Fund.
- These funds allowed the Board to expand the school rehabilitation/building project to \$8,000,000.
- Legal opinions approved expenditures of bond funds.
- Certified copies of outside auditors' reports approved expenditures of bond funds.
- Certified copies of State Auditor's reports approved expenditures of State funds.

COMMENDATION

The 1995/96 Ventura County Grand Jury extensively reviewed and examined the Santa Paula Union High School District Bond Measure "A" Initiative and all pertinent documentation relating to this issue. The Grand Jury has determined that the funds were used properly.

The 1995/96 Grand Jury commends the Santa Paula Union High School District for their use of the funds, acquired from the State, to enhance the original project.

The Grand Jury would also like to commend the School Board and staff for their spirit of cooperation throughout this investigation.

RESPONSE NOT REQUIRED