

SOMIS UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

5268 NORTH STREET – POST OFFICE BOX 900 – SOMIS, CA 93066
805/386-8258 – 805/386-2324 (FAX)

Board of Education

Jim Bushong
Patricia Ehrhardt
Bob Fulkerson
Jane Ogne
Mark Smith

Mary H. McKee, Ed.D. Superintendent/Principal

August 13, 2008

To: Ventura County Grand Jury
800 S. Victoria Ave L# 3751
Ventura, CA 93009

Subject: Response to Report
Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare

The Somis Union School District Board of Trustees reviewed the 2007-2008 report: Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare at its regular meeting on August 12, 2008. A copy of the minutes for that meeting is attached to this memo.

The Somis Board of Trustees agrees that the school safety and the welfare of students are one of the most critical issues and responsibilities of public schools. This Board establishes and addresses annual goals for providing safety and school climate. Goals and activities are monitored and implemented by a School District Safety Committee.

The Board concurs with the findings and conclusion of this report.

With regard to the recommendations of the report, the Board submits the following response:

R-01 All school districts should comply with AB 722 to maintain the recommended students: counselor ratios. Counseling is an important and effective support service. Somis has sixty students in grades 7 and 8. During the 2007-2008 school year, the District provided five hours of counseling a week. This program will be continued based on the continued funding and the availability of a credentialed hourly counselor.

R-02 All schools should have a dedicated SRO on campus during school hours. As a small single school district with a total of 260 students (K-8) on campus during school hours, it is cost prohibitive for this agency to employ a full time SRO. Given the size and location of the school, it is not an effective use of limited resources for either the school or local law enforcement. The District maintains a strong relationship and has excellent communication with law enforcement and draws support on an on-going basis. The District will continue to support this relationship and address issues and concerns with the agency and the District Safety Committee.

R-03 All permanent and temporary classrooms should have doors that latch from the inside. The District is reviewing the number of classrooms that can not be secured from the inside and will address this recommendation during the 2008-2009 school year.

R-04 All schools should issue unique identification badges to visitors. The school currently has a published visitor sign in procedure. All visitors are issued badges when they sign in on campus.

RECEIVED

AUG 19 2008

VENTURA COUNTY
GRAND JURY

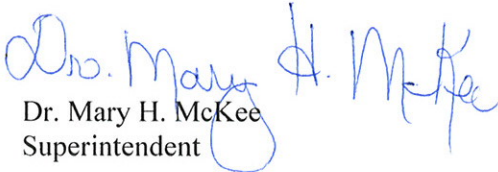
R-05 All schools should have perimeter fencing with locking gates to secure their campus.

The campus has perimeter fencing and locking gates. All gates are kept locked during the school day and a single entrance directs visitors to the school office.

R-06 All schools should continue/enhance anti-bullying and tolerance programs.

The District has adopted Second Step as a core anti-bullying and tolerance program. It also supports a school-wide character education program. Monthly assemblies support classroom instruction in anti-bullying and good character.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Somis Union School District Board of Trustees


Dr. Mary H. McKee
Superintendent

Attachment: Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting August 12, 2008

cc: Honorable Colleen Toy White, Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California, Ventura County
Hall of Justice, #2120



Conejo Valley Unified School District

PUPIL SERVICES

1400 East Janss Road, Thousand Oaks, California 91362-2198
Telephone (805) 497-9511 • FAX (805) 373-6981

Mario Contini
Superintendent of Schools

Linda L. Calvin, Ph.D.
*Associate Director
Pupil Services*

Lisa Dritz
*Assistant Director
Pupil Services*

September 10, 2008

Ventura County Grand Jury
800 S. Victoria Ave., L#3751
Ventura, CA 93009

And

Honorable Colleen Toy White, Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California, Ventura County
Hall of Justice, #2120
800 S. Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

Dear Sirs:

On behalf of the Conejo Valley Unified School District, the attachment contains our responses to the recommendations cited in the Ventura County 2007-2008 Grand Jury report entitled, *Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare*.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Linda L. Calvin, Ph.D.
Associate Director Pupil Services

cc: Mario Contini, Superintendent, Conejo Valley Unified School District
Janet Cosaro, Assistant Superintendent, Instructional Services Division

RECEIVED
SEP 23 2008
VENTURA COUNTY
GRAND JURY



CONEJO VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

1400 East Janss Road

Thousand Oaks, California 91362

September 10, 2008

TO: Ventura County Grand Jury
FROM: Conejo Valley Unified School, Instructional Services Division, Office of Pupil Services
RE: Response to the Ventura County 2007-2008 Grand Jury Report:
Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare

Per your request, the following are our responses to the list of recommendations made by the Ventura County Grand Jury:

Grand Jury Recommendation	Conejo District Response
R-O1 All school districts should comply with AB722 to maintain recommended students: counselor ratios. (C-09, C-10)	R-01 The students: counselor ratio in our middle schools in Conejo is 362:1 which is less than the AB722 recommendation of 461:1 students: counselor ratio.
R-02 All schools should have a dedicated SRO on campus during school hours. (C-11)	R-02 The school district has 3 City paid SROs whose primary responsibilities are to serve all of the middle (5) and high schools (3) and one continuation high school. The schools are divided into 3 clusters of 1 high school and the feeder middle schools. Each SRO is primarily stationed at one of the comprehensive high schools spending dedicated time at one or more middle school campuses approximately 1 hour per day with the rest of the time spent at the high school campuses. Though not physically on the middle school campus all day, the SROs are always on call and their response time is short because of close proximity to the middle school(s). This was developed carefully based on the recommendations of the police department and district. The Conejo Valley School District and the City Recreation and Park District have collaborated to pay for 2 Outreach Workers who serve all of the middle schools each week. They provide an additional resource for interventions at the middle school. Each school site and district also has in place a Comprehensive School Safety Plan that covers areas such as discipline and safety procedures. Currently, effort is being placed on the implementation of a Threat Assessment Plan in collaboration with the police department using the same SRO's and district staff to respond early before an incident occurs. It would be prohibitive monetarily to hire a dedicated SRO for each middle and high school and is not recommended as being needed at this time.

R-03 All permanent and temporary classrooms should have doors that lock from the inside. (C-05)	R-03 All of the permanent and temporary classrooms have doors that lock from the inside.
R-04 All schools should issue unique identification badges to visitors. (C-08)	R-04 All visitors at each middle school must sign in at the front office and get permission to be on campus. If they are staying, they are given a visitor's badge to wear while on campus. If the visitor is a District employee, they wear a special badge with their name on it.
R-05 All schools should have perimeter fencing with locking gates to secure the campus.	R-05 All of the middle schools have perimeter fencing with locking gates that secure the campus.
R-06 All schools should continue/enhance anti-bullying and tolerance programs. (C-12)	R-06 All schools continually work with students regarding anti-bullying and tolerance for others. As reflected in the School Comprehensive Safety Plans, all of the campuses stress tolerance and respect for each other by means of a number of support services including, but not limited to: counseling, anti-drug and tobacco programs, consistent implementation of a strong discipline policy, many positive group activities and events that provide for meaningful student interactions, and the presence of SROs and Outreach Workers at all middle school campuses. Each family receives annually by mail a written document entitled <i>Discipline Policies and Procedures and Annual Notification of Right and Responsibilities</i> that outlines the expectations for student behavior and the parental rights and responsibilities. Other approaches for stressing appropriate student behavior work include specific presentations in the classroom, dissemination of information throughout the school year, parent conferences, Back to School Nights and special site events.

NOTE:

The report and final responses were verified and reviewed by Instructional Services Division staff which was delegated to respond to the Ventura County 2007-08 Grand Jury Recommendations for Middle Schools. A copy of this final report will be disseminated to the Superintendent of Conejo Valley Unified School District and appropriate staff.



Fillmore Unified School District

Office of the Superintendent

627 Sespe Avenue • Fillmore, CA 93015

Phone (805) 524- 6038 • Fax (805) 524-6060

September 10, 2008

Honorable Colleen Toy White, Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California, Ventura County
Hall of Justice, #2120
800 S. Victoria Ave.
Ventura, CA 93009

Dear Judge White:

The Fillmore Unified School District received a copy of the Ventura County 2007-2008 Grand Jury report titled, *Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare*. A letter accompanying the report indicated a response was needed indicating agreement with the findings and if the District has instituted the applicable recommendations. This letter will serve as that response.

The Fillmore Unified School District is in agreement with the findings stated in the Ventura County 2007-2008 Grand Jury report titled, *Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare*.

The Fillmore Unified School District' response to the recommendations stated in the Ventura County 2007-2008 Grand Jury report titled, *Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare* is as follows:

- R-01.** All school districts should comply with AB722 to maintain recommended students:counselor ratios. *The Fillmore Middle School's students: counselor ratio is 435:1. The **recommendation** is implemented.*
- R-02.** All Schools should have a dedicated SRO on campus during school hours. *The Fillmore Unified School District has one SRO that is shared between the high school, middle school and alternative school. (The Fillmore Unified District pays for 70% of the SRO, the remaining portions being shared by the City and the Sheriff's Department.) All of the schools are adjacent to each other. Due to close proximity of the campuses and the cost of funding an SRO solely for the middle school, the **recommendation** of having a dedicated SRO for the middle will not be implemented because it is unreasonable.*
- R-03.** All permanent and temporary classrooms should have doors that lock from the inside. *Some of Fillmore Middle School's classrooms can have doors locked from the inside. The district will review this **recommendation** over the next six months to determine the costs of upgrading all of the rooms to the standard stated.*
- R-04.** All Schools should issue unique identification badges to visitors. *Fillmore Middle School issues unique identification badges to visitors. The **recommendation** is implemented.*

RECEIVED

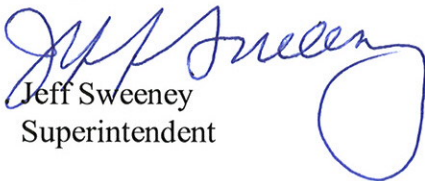
SEP 16 2008

VENTURA COUNTY
GRAND JURY

- R-05.** All Schools should have perimeter fencing with locking gates to secure their campus.
*Fillmore Middle School has perimeter fencing with locking gates to secure their campus. The **recommendation** is implemented.*
- R-06.** All Schools should continue/enhance anti-bullying and tolerance programs.
*Fillmore Middle School has several programs that focus on anti-bullying and tolerance on their campus. In **The Great Body Shop**, there are integrated lessons that touch on this subject. Last year, the District purchased **The Second Step and Lesson One** programs for elementary sites. In addition, students voluntarily attend one day workshops that are funded by a grant. All students are reminded about the site's zero tolerance in this area during student assemblies. Further, counselors and site administrators provide individual interventions as needed. The **recommendation** is implemented.*

The Fillmore Unified School District appreciates the intent of the Grand Jury's report and will share this response with the District's Board of Trustees at the September 16, 2008 meeting.

Respectfully,


Jeff Sweeney
Superintendent

cc: Ventura County Grand Jury

HUENEME SCHOOL DISTRICT

205 N. Ventura Road

(805) 488-3588

Port Hueneme, CA 93041-3065

JERRY DANNENBERG, Ed.D.
SUPERINTENDENT

DEBORAH DESMETH
ASSISTANT SUPT.-HUMAN RESOURCES

ROBIN I. FREEMAN
ASSISTANT SUPT.-ED. SERVICES

DEBRA B. REEVES
CHIEF BUSINESS OFFICIAL

July 29, 2008

Ventura County Grand Jury
800 South Victoria Avenue, L#3751
Ventura, California 93009

**RE: District Response to the Ventura County 2007-2008 Grand Jury report,
*Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare***

To Whom It May Concern:

We have the 45 findings of the Grand Jury in relation to the safety and welfare of our junior high school students. We are in agreement with these findings.

The Board of Education reviewed the findings and recommendations and approved this response at their meeting held on July 28, 2008.

Below is the Hueneme School District's response to each of the six recommendations made by the Grand Jury in its June 14, 2008 letter to the District.

R-01 All school districts should comply with AB 722 to maintain recommended student:counselor ratios. (C-09; C-10)

Response

Both E.O. Green and Charles Blackstock Junior Schools have two counselors assigned to support their 7th and 8th grade students. E.O. Green's ratio is 402 students per counselor (Counselors Gomez and Henniger). Blackstock's ratio is 418 students per counselor (Counselors Magallan and Rivera).

R-02 All schools should have a dedicated SRO on campus during school hours. (C-11)

Response

The Oxnard Police Department provides an SRO to our schools as well as having beat coordinators and patrol officers working with our schools as needed.

R-03 All permanent and temporary classrooms should have doors that lock from the inside. (C-11)

Response

All of Green's and Blackstock's permanent doors can be locked from the inside. By the start of school on August 25, 2008, we will have new locks on the portable classrooms so that they can also be locked from the inside.

RECEIVED

JUL 31 2008

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

SCOTT SWENSON, PRESIDENT • RAFAEL (RALPH) RAMOS, CLERK • ELAINE K. GABER, TRUSTEE • DARLENE A. BRUNO, TRUSTEE • CITIA A. Y. GUERRA, TRUSTEE

VENTURA COUNTY
GRAND JURY

R-04 All schools should issue unique identification badges to visitors. (C-08)

Response

Both Green and Blackstock have unique identification badges printed in their school colors. Please see samples, attached.

R-05 All schools should have perimeter fencing with locking gates to secure their campus. (C-04)

Response

Both Green and Blackstock have perimeter fencing with locking gates.

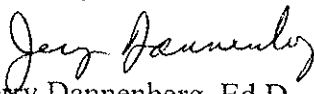
R-06 All schools should continue/enhance anti-bullying and tolerance programs. (C-12)

Response

This summer, our Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services, Ms. Robin I. Freeman, is sending a team from each school to become trainers of other staff members in the *Character Counts!* curriculum. The desired outcome of this program is to enhance our other anti-bullying and tolerance programs. Another district-adopted program is the *Second Step* curriculum that teaches students how to deal with anger and bullying.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please give me a call at 488-3588, Extension 9-100.

Sincerely,


Jerry Dannenberg, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Enclosure: Section of the Minutes of the regular meeting of the Governing Board held on July 28, 2008 that describes the board's approval of the Superintendent's response

Copies to:

Honorable Colleen Toy White, Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California, Ventura County
Hall of Justice, #2120
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, California 93009

Hueneme School District Board of Education

off
Mesa Union School District

JUL 9 2008

Official Minutes of the July 7, 2008 regular meeting of the Board of Trustees

**OFFICE OF THE
PRESIDING JUDGE**

Resolution #08-09-01	On motion of Trustee Sullivan, seconded by Trustee Thielemann and carried with a 4-0-1 vote, the Resolution was adopted.
Resolution #08-09-02	On motion of Trustee Alweiss, seconded by Trustee Thielemann and carried with a 4-0-1 vote, the Resolution #08-09-02 was adopted.
Resolution #08-09-03	On motion of Trustee Sullivan, seconded by Trustee Alweiss and carried with a 4-0-1 vote, Resolution #08-09-03 was adopted.
Resolution #08-09-04	On motion of Trustee Thielemann, seconded by Trustee Sullivan and carried with a 4-0-1 vote, Resolution #08-09-04 was adopted.
Bond Purchase Agreement (BPA)	On motion of Trustee Alweiss, seconded by Trustee Sullivan and carried with a 4-0-1 vote, the draft Bond Purchase Agreement was approved.
Preliminary Official Statement (POS)	On motion of Trustee Thielemann, seconded by Trustee Sullivan and carried with a 4-0-1 vote, the draft Preliminary Official Statement (POS) was approved.
Driscoll Grant	On motion of Trustee Thielemann, seconded by Trustee Lu and carried with a 5-0-0 vote, the Driscoll Grant of \$5,869 was accepted.
Travel Ed	On motion of Trustee Sullivan, seconded by Trustee Lu and carried with a 4-0-1 vote, the agreement.
New Hire	On motion of Trustee Alweiss, seconded by Trustee Sullivan and carried with a 5-0-0 vote, the Board ratified the hiring of Christina Garber as a Jr. High Teacher, Column III, Step I on the certificated salary schedule.
P.E. Position	On motion of Trustee Lu, seconded by Trustee Sullivan and carried with a vote, the 80% P.E. Position was conditionally approved based on non-deficit spending..
Zangle Agreement	On motion of Trustee Alweiss, seconded by Trustee Sullivan and carried with a 5-0-0 vote, the Zangle agreement was approved.
Student Teacher Agreement	On motion of Trustee Thielemann, seconded by Trustee Sullivan and carried with a 5-0-0 vote, the Student Teacher Agreement with Cal State Channel Islands was approved.
Grand Jury	On motion of Trustee, Sullivan, seconded by Trustee Lu and carried with a 5-0-0 vote the Grand Jury Report on "Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare" was accepted.
Student Technology Use Agreement	On motion of Trustee Sullivan, seconded by Trustee Thielemann and carried with a 5-0-0 vote, the Student Technology Use Agreement was approved.
Resolution #08-09-05	On motion of Trustee, Alweiss, seconded by Trustee Sullivan and carried with a 5-0-0 vote, Resolution #08-09-05 Authorization of Budget Transfer from Fund 171 Technology Reserve to Fund 010 General Fund was adopted
Superintendent Reports	Superintendent 1. Drafting resolution regarding proposed prison – Board provided input on items that would negatively impact the Mesa Union School District.

COPY

How Prepared is your School?

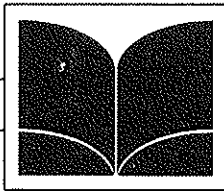
	Yes	No	
Building and Grounds			
1.	X		Is your school free of hazardous materials (asbestos, pesticides, and paint)? How do you handle poor air quality days?
2.	X		Is your school in full compliance with all fire codes? How often is your school inspected, and when was the last inspection? once a year. AUG 2007
3.		X	Is your school campus secured with fencing and gates?
4.			What measures are taken to limit and control points of entry Signage, personnel surveillance + supervision, video surveillance, OFFICE AS HUB - requirements for all visitors
5.	X		Are your school buildings earthquake safe?
6.	X		Does each classroom have a telephone with outside line access?
7.	X		Is all appropriate campus maintenance being performed?
8.		X	Do the doors in your school lock from the inside?
Administration			
9.	X		Does your school have an updated School Safety and Crisis Response Plan that is familiar to staff and students and is practiced regularly? When was the last update? march 2007
10.	X		Does your school have a comprehensive crisis containment plan? (lock down)
11.	X		Does your school have in-service training for staff on safety issues and ongoing drills and practice? How often? ANNUAL

Attachment-01
Survey: How Prepared is Your School?

	Yes	No	Administration
12.	X		Are staff members notified about potentially violent or troubled students? How? Document review as appropriate.
13.	X		Has your school prepared an "Emergency" parent notification plan for major emergency events (i.e., earthquakes, fire, violent intrusions, etc.)? Is it telephone, e-mail, public media, or other? Please specify. LTV, RADIO CONNECTED.
14.	X		Does your school have appropriate enforcement of discipline? How? A variety of administrative, staff, and parent/student communications and processes.
15.			How does the school determine if a potential visitor belongs there or not? -Badges, + personnel surveillance.
16.	X		Is an identification badge system, including visitors, used on your campus?
17.	X		Is your school equipped with emergency supplies? What type?
18.	X		Does staff supervising the campus have hand held communication devices? What are they?
19.		X	Does the school have peer mediation and conflict resolution programs? If so, what programs are available?
20.	X		Does your school have anti-bullying, tolerance, and character education programs? What are they? Various locally adapted programs.

	Yes	No	Administration
21.	X		<p>Does your school have counselors who can provide help to troubled students?</p> <p>What is your ratio of student to counselor? 575 kids To 1 counselor (K-8) 200 To 1 (6-8)</p>
22.	X		<p>Does your school have a close cooperative relationship with local law enforcement?</p> <p>X Does your school have a School Resource Officer or something comparable? If so what do they do?</p> <p>Is there a job description? NA</p> <p>How many hours a week are they on campus? NA</p> <p>How are they paid? NA</p>
23.		X	<p>Do you provide encouragement for parents willing to help in crime prevention?</p> <p>If so, how many parents are involved in your school? NA</p>
24.	X		<p>Do you take threats seriously and deal with them as acts of violence?</p> <p>How are they followed up on and what actions are taken? Appropriate actions + parent, students, + law enforcement communications.</p>
25.		X	<p>Do you have a method to facilitate anonymous reporting of threats or problems?</p> <p>What is it?</p>
26.	X		<p>Is training being provided for school staff and students in becoming aware of their surroundings, meaning they will notice and report behavior that presents cause for concern or the presence of people who don't belong on campus?</p> <p>What is it? Annual safety procedures review</p>

These questions are based in part on an article in "California Educator, October 2007".



Learning Today to Lead Tomorrow

MOORPARK UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

5297 Maureen Lane, Moorpark, California 93021

(805) 378-6300

August 20, 2008

Ventura County Grand Jury
800 S. Victoria Avenue, L#3751
Ventura, California 93009

SUBJECT: Response to Grand Jury Report *Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare*

To the Ventura County Grand Jury:

The Governing Board of the Moorpark Unified School District reviewed and discussed the "Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare" report at its June 24, 2008 meeting. The District's response below addresses Penal Code 933(c) requirements to include agreement or disagreement with the findings and an implementation summary or status.

R-01 All school districts should comply with AB722 to maintain recommended students: counselor ratios of 461:1 for middle schools.

The District agrees that access to counselors by students during the critical middle school years is very important. The District expects to maintain a counselor to student ratio of under 400 per student for the coming year at the middle school level, despite the severe reduction in both the state General Fund allocation and the categorical Supplemental Counseling grant that has necessitated reductions in essential personnel.

R-02 All schools should have a dedicated SRO on campus during school hours.

The District agrees with this finding. Currently, the City of Moorpark is funding a Resource Officer for the comprehensive high school. The District believes that community policing is primarily the responsibility of local law enforcement. Due to severe state budget cut backs, the District has had to reduce essential staff and is not able to fund all needed programs, including contributions toward resource officers in the schools.

R-03 All permanent and temporary classrooms should have doors that lock from the inside.

The discussion of locks on the inside of classrooms has been a controversial topic for years. Concerns range from the potential fire evacuation hindrance if keyed dead bolts were in place to the problem of students or assailants barricading a classroom to lock out

BOARD OF EDUCATION

David Pollock, President

Bruce Thomas, Vice President

Greg Barker, Clerk

Mindy Yaras, Member

Ron LaGuardia, Member

Ellen Smith, District Superintendent

VENTURA COUNTY
GRAND JURY

An Equal Opportunity Employer

authorities if thumb-turn bolts were used. The current thinking is that it is best to have a key locking door from the outside that each teacher controls and practices securing during regular "lock down" drills. Secondary locks with inherent potential problems would also be a significant expense.

R-04 All schools should issue unique identification badges to visitors.

The District agrees and fully implements this recommendation.

R-05 All school should have perimeter fencing with locking gates to secure their campus.

The District agrees and fully implements this recommendation.

R-06 All schools should continue/enhance anti-bullying and tolerance programs.

The District agrees. All schools have character development and prevention education programs in place to promote healthy social/emotional skills, teach tolerance and train students with violence prevention strategies. This is an ongoing high priority effort involving students, teachers, parents, counselors, administrators and community groups.

On behalf of the Governing Board,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ellen Smith", written in a cursive style.

Ellen Smith
District Superintendent

cc: Honorable Colleen Toy White, Presiding Judge

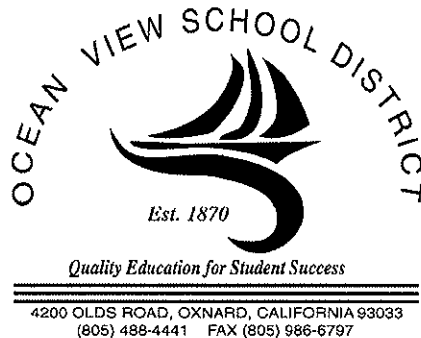
ADMINISTRATION

NANCY J. CARROLL, Ph.D.
Superintendent

CRAIG W. HELMSTEDTER, Ed.D.
Associate Superintendent

WILLIAM C. YOUNG
Assistant Superintendent – Business
Services

MARCIA TURNER
Assistant Superintendent –
Curriculum, Instruction &
Assessment



GOVERNING BOARD

PAUL H. CHATMAN
ELLEN M. FITTS
RICHARD KENNEDY
SUSAN LUCKEY
JAMES A. MERRILL

July 1, 2008

Ventura County Grand Jury
800 S. Victoria Avenue, L#3751
Ventura, CA 93009

Dear Members of the Grand Jury,

As per your letter of June 12, 2008, which includes a copy of the Ventura County 2007-2008 Grand Jury report titled, *Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare*, this response addresses recommendations R-01 through R-06 listed on page 9.

R-01 All school districts should comply with AB722 to maintain recommended students: counselor ratios.

Ocean View School received 2007-08 Supplemental State Counseling funding. A second counselor was hired and assigned to the middle school 50% of the week. For the 2008-09 school year an additional day will be added to the counselor's work assignment at the middle school. The student to counselor ratio will be 683:1 which is within the ratio ranges.

R-02 All Schools should have a dedicated SRO on campus during school hours.

Ocean View Jr. High is assigned an SRO during school hours by the Oxnard City Police. This SRO is shared with two other schools.

R-03 All permanent and temporary classrooms should have doors that lock from the inside.

All classrooms at Ocean View Jr. High School have doors that lock from the inside.

R-04 All School should issue unique identification badges to visitors.

All visitors are required to check-in at the Ocean View Jr. High School office. Visitors are required to wear a special badge identifying them as a "visitor".

RECEIVED

AUG 26 2008

VENTURA COUNTY
GRAND JURY

R-05 All Schools should have a perimeter fencing with locking gates to secure their campus.

Ocean View Jr. High and Mar Vista Schools are located adjacent to each other. Perimeter fencing with locking gates to secure their campuses is shared. New construction will begin at Ocean View Jr. High during the spring months of 2009. During the construction of a new 2-story building, a section of permanent fencing will be removed and replaced with temporary fencing. When construction is completed, the permanent perimeter fencing will be reinstalled.

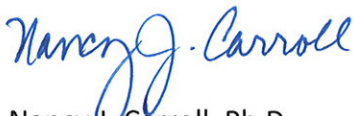
R-06 All Schools should continue/enhance anti-bullying and tolerance programs.

In August 2008, all Ocean View Jr. High staff, faculty and students will participate in "Second Step", a comprehensive anti-violence training program. Anti-bullying and tolerance components are included in the program and will be addressed.

In accordance with Penal Code §933(c) a copy of this letter will be sent to: Honorable Colleen Toy White, Presiding Judge Superior Court of California, Ventura County Hall of Justice, #2120, 800 S. Victoria Avenue, Ventura, California 93009. Also included is an excerpt of the Governing Board minutes certifying approval of this response to the Grand Jury's report.

Please contact me at (805) 488-4441 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Nancy L. Carroll, Ph.D.
Superintendent
Ocean View School District



Ojai Unified School District

414 East Ojai Avenue, P.O. Box 878, Ojai, CA 93024
(805) 640-4300 • Fax (805) 640-4419 • www.ojai.k12.ca.us

September 9, 2008

Ventura County Grand Jury
800 South Victoria Avenue L#3751
Ventura, CA 93009

RE: Ventura County Middle School Safety and Welfare

Dear Honorable Members of the Grand Jury,

Please find enclosed Ojai Unified School District's response to your letter dated June 14, 2008.
Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Tim Baird, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Cc: Honorable Colleen Toy White, Presiding Judge

RECEIVED
SEP 11 2008
VENTURA COUNTY
GRAND JURY

Administration

Timothy Baird, Ed.D., Superintendent
Dannielle Pusatere, Assistant Superintendent Business and Administrative Services

Board of Education

Steve Fields, President
Linda Taylor, Vice President
Kathi Smith, Clerk
Pauline Mercado, Ph.D., Member
Rikki Horne, Member



Ojai Unified School District

414 East Ojai Avenue, P.O. Box 878, Ojai, CA 93024
(805) 640-4300 • Fax (805) 640-4419 • www.ojai.k12.ca.us

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY INVESTIGATION ON MIDDLE SCHOOL SAFETY AND WELFARE

8/19/08

During the 2007/2008 school year, the Ventura County Grand Jury initiated an investigation in middle school safety and welfare. Following an extensive review of existing conditions in the county, the Grand Jury released six recommendations for school districts. All districts in the county are required to respond to the recommendations. The following is Ojai Unified School District's response to the recommendations:

R-01 All school districts should comply with AB722 to maintain recommended students; counselor ratios.

Response: OUSD agrees with this finding. Our projected staffing numbers for the 2008/2009 school year meet this requirement.

R-02 All schools should have a dedicated SRO on campus during school hours.

Response: Although OUSD agrees with this in principle, the current funding for our school district does not allow us to have a dedicated SRO at the high school and a separate one at the middle school. Our current SRO is based at our high school and reports to the middle school when needed.

R-03 All permanent and temporary classrooms should have doors that lock from the inside.

Response: Again, OUSD agrees in concept but our funding does not allow us to change out the door locks for every classroom. In some cases, the District has temporary rubber door straps that can be removed from the inside effectively locking the door.

R-04 All schools should issue unique identification badges to visitors.

Response: OUSD agrees with this recommendation and we currently have this policy in place.

Administration

Timothy Baird, Ed.D., Superintendent
Dannielle Pusatere, Assistant Superintendent Business and Administrative Services

Board of Education

Steve Fields, President
Linda Taylor, Vice President
Kathi Smith, Clerk
Rikki Horne, Member
Pauline Mercado, Ph.D., Member

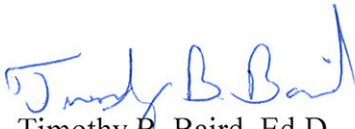
R-05 All schools should have perimeter fencing with locking gates to secure their campus.

Response: OUSD disagrees with this finding. Our middle school does not have a locking perimeter fence at this time and we have no plan to put one up. There is little research to support that perimeter fencing safeguards a school from a determined intruder. However, there is a great deal of anecdotal evidence that supports a decline in school climate when school campuses are turned into prisons. We do keep a vigilant watch on our campus and immediately report any suspicious behavior to the office.

R-06 All schools should continue/enhance anti-bullying and tolerance programs.

Response: OUSD strongly agrees with this recommendation. We have a number of anti-bullying and tolerance programs in place on our campus. We will continue to support and enhance these programs.

Submitted by,


Timothy B. Baird, Ed.D.
Superintendent



OXNARD SCHOOL DISTRICT

1051 South "A" Street • Oxnard, California 93030 • 805/487-3918 • www.oxnardsd.org

August 21, 2008

Don Cody, Ed.D. ✓
Foreman
Ventura County Grand Jury
800 S. Victoria Avenue, L#3751
Ventura, California 93009

The Honorable Colleen Toy White
Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California, Ventura County
Hall of Justice, #2120
800 S. Victoria Avenue
Ventura, California 93009

Re: Oxnard School District/Response to Grand Jury Report

Dear Dr. Cody and Judge White:

Enclosed please find the Board Approved Oxnard School District Response to the Grand Jury Report dated August 20, 2008.

As soon as the August 20, 2008 board minutes approving said response are available, we will forward them to you.

If you have any questions and/or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us at (805) 487-3918 ext. 285.

Sincerely,

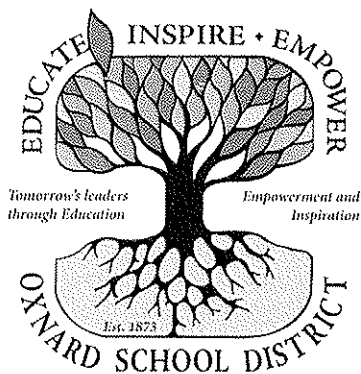
Paulina Pierce
Executive Assistant, Educational Services

/pp

RECEIVED

AUG 26 2008

VENTURA COUNTY
GRAND JURY



OXNARD SCHOOL DISTRICT

1051 South "A" Street • Oxnard, California 93030 • 805/487-3918 • www.oxnardsd.org

August 20, 2008

Don Cody, Ed.D
Foreman
Ventura County Grand Jury
800 S. Victoria Avenue, L#3751
Ventura, California 93009

The Honorable Colleen Toy White
Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California, Ventura County
Hall of Justice, #2120
800 S. Victoria Avenue
Ventura, California 93009

Re: Oxnard School District/Response to Grand Jury Report

Dear Dr. Cody and Judge White:

This is in response to the letter from the Ventura County Grand Jury dated June 14, 2008, requiring a response to the Ventura County 2007-2008 Grand Jury report entitled, *Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare*. The Grand Jury conducted a survey of 27 Ventura County middle schools concerning school safety issues. The findings in the Grand Jury's report summarize the information gathered from this survey. The Oxnard School District responds to the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations as follows:

FINDINGS:

F-01. It was reported that 76% of the schools were free of hazardous materials. Twenty-four percent reported having some hazardous materials (e.g. paints, asbestos, and chemicals); however, these were appropriately stored and were, "...encapsulated and were non-friable."

Response: Agree.

F-02. The Office of the Ventura County Superintendent of Schools issues air quality alerts to all Ventura County School Districts. Schools reduce physical activities and outdoor exposure of students and staff during these alerts.

Response: Agree.

RECEIVED

AUG 26 2008

VENTURA COUNTY
GRAND JURY

F-03. All schools reported that they are in compliance with fire codes.

Response: Agree.

F-04. All Schools are inspected annually by a Ventura County Fire Marshall. Many Schools reported additional unscheduled local Fire Department inspections.

Response: Agree.

F-05. Seventy-six percent of schools are secured with fencing and gates; the remainders have partial perimeter fencing.

Response: Agree. All middle schools in the Oxnard School District have full perimeter fencing and gates that are locked during the school day.

F-06. Schools with full perimeter fencing have locked gates for outside entry during the school day. Schools with partial perimeter fencing have assigned Campus Supervisors to control all entry points. Signage at schools directs all visitors to the front office.

Response: Agree.

F-07. All Schools are in compliance with Title 5, California Code of Regulations, which requires "Educational facilities planned by school districts shall be designed to meet federal, state, and local statutory requirements for structure, fire, and public safety."

Response: Agree.

F-08. Ninety-two percent of classrooms have telephones with outside line access.

Response: Agree. Every classroom in the District's middle schools has a telephone with outside line access.

F-09. All Schools reported that campus maintenance is being performed appropriately by their respective District Facilities and Maintenance Departments.

Response: Agree.

F-10. Forty-four percent of schools have classroom doors that lock from the inside.

Response: Agree, with the clarification that all main doors to the front offices, quad buildings, and classrooms have indoor lock bars. Portables do not lock from the inside.

- F-11. Fifty-six percent of schools report that some of their classrooms do not have doors that lock from the inside.

Response: Agree, with the clarification that all classrooms have indoor lock bars except for classrooms in portable buildings.

- F-12. None of the portable classrooms have doors that lock from the inside.

Response: Agree.

- F-13. All schools have updated comprehensive School Safety Plans. Drills are practiced regularly and results are recorded, filed, and discussed by staff to ensure expected results were achieved.

Response: Agree.

- F-14. Most schools completed updates of their safety plans during the fourth quarter of 2007; other schools updated plans during the first quarter of 2008.

Response: Agree.

- F-15. All schools have a Crisis Containment Plan that is part of their comprehensive School Safety Plan. Lock-down drills are performed several times annually and results are recorded, filed, and discussed by staff to ensure expected results were achieved.

Response: Agree.

- F-16. Ninety-six percent of schools have annual in-service training for staff on safety issues as directed by their School Safety Plans.

Response: Agree.

- F-17. All schools conduct safety drills several times annually.

Response: Agree.

- F-18. All schools notify staff regarding potentially violent/troubled students.

Response: Agree.

- F-19. All schools have emergency parent notification plans in place. Notification options include automated telephone message systems (Connect-Ed, Parent-Connect, All Call Voice Out), and some schools may also use E-mail and local radio station broadcasts.

Response: Agree. The Oxnard School District uses NTI-Connect-Ed.

- F-20. Schools use various policies/actions as guided by the applicable Education Code, to enforce discipline including: referrals to school administration, parent conferences, Student Attendance Review Boards (SARB), progressive discipline plans (e.g. detention, suspension, expulsion).

Response: Agree.

- F-21. All school visitors are required to sign in at the front office and most are provided a visitor's identification badge if they have a valid reason to be on campus. Staff checks visitor information including: verifying emergency cards against valid visitor identification, verifying campus volunteer identification to ensure that they are cleared by district offices, requiring that all vendors check in at the front office before entering campuses, challenging any visitor who does not have a valid visitor's identification badge.

Response: Agree.

- F-22. Eighty-eight percent of schools have an identification badge system.

Response: Agree. All teachers/staff at the Oxnard School District have name badges and visitors receive visitor passes.

- F-23. All schools have approximately three days of emergency supplies on campus. These typically include: potable water, food, emergency medical supplies, blankets, flashlights, and communication devices (e.g., two-way radios, etc.)

Response: Agree.

- F-24. All schools have several two-way radios (walkie-talkies) that are used by campus supervisors.

Response: Agree.

- F-25. Ninety-two percent of schools have peer mediation and conflict resolution programs. The other schools have counselor/administration mediation and conflict resolution programs in place.

Response: Agree.

- F-26. Counselors provide support for these programs through individual and group counseling. The programs include: Rachel's challenge, Second Step, Safe School Ambassadors Programs, "Don't Laugh at me", Character Counts, Word Trait of the Month, and Pride Program.

Response: Agree. One counselor, funded by the Pupil Retention Block Grant, also serves as an outreach consultant.

- F-27. All schools have unique programs that address bullying, intolerance, and that provide character education. Schools often use one or more of the programs listed in the previous finding.

Response: Agree.

- F-28. All schools except one have at least one counselor.

Response: Agree. All middle schools in the Oxnard School District have at least one counselor.

- F-29. Students: counselor ratio ranges from 314:1 to 840:1.

Response: Agree.

- F-30. All schools report having a close working relationship with their local law enforcement and have direct and immediate access to officers via telephone.

Response: Agree.

- F-31. Nine schools have dedicated SROs assigned to their campuses; some schools may share one officer. These officers are generally on campus two to four hours, three or four days each week. SROs provide services such as: counseling students, serving as deterrent to inappropriate behavior, conducting home visits as necessary, citing students for infractions, dealing with truancy issues, monitoring campus for intruders.

Response: Agree.

- F-32. School Resource Officers (“SRO”s) are generally compensated by local law enforcement agencies, school districts, individual cities, federal grants under Title IV (Safe and Drug Free Schools) and/or combinations of these.

Response: Agree.

- F-33. Eighty-four percent of schools encourage parental participation in their school crime prevention effort.

Response: Agree. The Oxnard School District encourages parental participation in crime prevention.

- F-34. The number of parents actively involved in crime prevention programs at these schools is minimal.

Response: Agree.

F-35. All schools report that they take threats seriously and deal with them immediately.

Response: Agree.

F-36. Schools follow district, local, state and federal guidelines for threats including: investigating all threats thoroughly, notifying parents, involving SRO/law enforcement agencies when appropriate, debriefing staff, notifying district administrators, taking appropriate disciplinary action.

Response: Agree.

F-37. All schools have systems/procedures to facilitate anonymous reporting of threats/problems. These include: WeTip, Safe School Ambassadors, Standardized Emergency Management System, anonymous telephone hotline, anonymous notes to staff, E-mail.

Response: Agree.

F-38. Students are reluctant to report threats or problems.

Response: Agree.

F-39. Eighty-four percent of schools have formal and/or informal awareness training programs for their staff and students. Various school safety issues are discussed at staff meetings, student body assemblies, and during counselor presentations. Topics include: lock-down procedures, awareness of strangers, identification badge system, incident reporting procedures, gang awareness, anti-bullying/anti-harassment, sexual harassment, sexual abuse, physical abuse, school safety rules.

Response: Agree. The Oxnard School District holds regular assemblies to review school safety.

OTHER FINDINGS:

F-40. School campuses observed by the Grand Jury are well maintained.

Response: Agree.

F-41. School administrators interviewed stated that perimeter fencing and gates help control access to their campuses.

Response: Agree.

F-42. *AB722 Study of Pupil Personnel Ratios, Services, and Programs*, dated July 2003, recommends that the “adequate ratio” of students: counselor at middle schools is 461:1

Response: Agree.

- F-43. AB722 also states, "Today's students face increased challenges with decreased support. Peer pressure, bullying at school, dysfunctional families, drug and tobacco use, growing teen suicide rates all contribute to student feelings of anxiety and depression and create barriers to learning. More than ever before, counseling and pupil support services play a critical role in the academic preparation and social development of our youth."

Response: Agree with the clarification that the statement in F-43 is a citation from the *Study of Pupil Personnel Ratios, Services and Programs* (July 2003) published by the California Department of Education.

- F-44. Law Enforcement Agencies throughout the County expressed support for having SROs on all middle and high school campuses. They further said that SROs help maintain secure campuses and promote safer learning environments.

Response: Agree.

- F-45. The successful SRO works during the normal school day as well as during co-curricular events. The SRO is instrumental in providing a safe environment conducive to the learning process. Students and faculty have a heightened perception of safety due to the work of the SRO. The SRO strives to improve the "working" environment for students, administrators, faculty, custodians, food service workers and others.

Response: Agree.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- R-1. All school districts should comply with AB722 to maintain recommended student:counselor ratios.

Response: This recommendation requires further analysis. Ideally, all middle schools should maintain the student:counselor ratios recommended by the *Study of Pupil Personnel Ratios, Services and Programs*, published by the California Department of Education in July 2003. Given the Governor's proposed budget cuts to public education for the 2008-09 school year and the resulting fiscal crisis that California public schools are currently facing, this recommended ratio may not be financially feasible at the present time. Governor Schwarzenegger's May Revision to his 2008-09 Proposed Budget would cut funding by \$3.9 billion for California public schools. The proposed cuts to K-12 education translate to a reduction of \$655 per student.¹ Consequently, this recommendation requires further analysis to determine whether the Governor's proposed budget cuts to education will actually be implemented in the coming months, or whether the

¹ *The Governor's Proposed Budget Would Make Deep Cuts In Funding For California's Public Schools*, California Budget Project (June 3, 2008).

final budget will provide additional funding for public education. Once the final state budget for 2008-09 is published, the District will be able to determine whether the District will have the financial resources to fund additional counselor positions at its middle schools. The District's analysis of the financial feasibility of the recommended student:counselor ratio will be prepared for review by the District Superintendent no later than December 14, 2008, in compliance with the mandated timeframe under Penal Code Section 933.05.

- R-2. All schools should have a dedicated SRO on campus during school hours.

Response: The District has already implemented this recommendation to the extent that funding exists to support these SRO positions. Currently, three School Resource Officers serve the Oxnard School District. While the SROs are not physically stationed at the middle school campuses, each middle school has a dedicated School Resource Officer on call during school hours. These officers respond promptly when contacted by the school. The cost of the SROs is shared equally between the District and the Oxnard Police Department. Additional SROs would require the District to pay the entire salary, approximately \$105,104 per officer, assuming that the Oxnard Police Department had staff to assign. The District does not currently have the funding to hire additional SROs.

- R-3. All permanent and temporary classrooms should have doors that lock from the inside.

Response: This recommendation requires further analysis. Oxnard School District middle school classrooms have inside locking mechanisms from the inside, with the following exceptions: Fremont Intermediate School – eight portables and two classrooms; Frank Intermediate School – seven portables; Haydock Intermediate School – five portables and twenty three classrooms. All modernized classrooms include handicap-compliant locking mechanisms. All doors on all classrooms are capable of being locked from the outside.

The cost of providing inside locks to non-compliant classrooms would be: Twenty lever locks at \$370/classroom, twenty three mortise locks at \$370/classroom, and three exit devices at \$730/device; totaling \$18,100. This recommendation warrants further study, including identification of a funding source to completely satisfy this recommendation. A proposal for funding and allocation of personnel will be brought to the Superintendent by August 15, 2008.

- R-4. All schools should issue unique identification badges to visitors.

Response: The District has already implemented this recommendation. The District requires visitors to sign in at the front office at each school site. If the visitor is on campus for a legitimate purpose, the individual is issued a visitor's name badge and is permitted on campus. Haydock Intermediate School was the only middle school in the District reporting that it did not issue visitor passes. The District will ensure that unique identification badges are issued to visitors at Haydock Intermediate School beginning August 1, 2008.

- R-5. All schools should have perimeter fencing with locking gates to secure their campus.

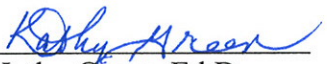
Response: The District has implemented this recommendation. All middle schools in the Oxnard School District are closed campuses with perimeter fencing and gates that are locked during the school day.

- R-6. All schools should continue/enhance anti-bullying and tolerance programs.

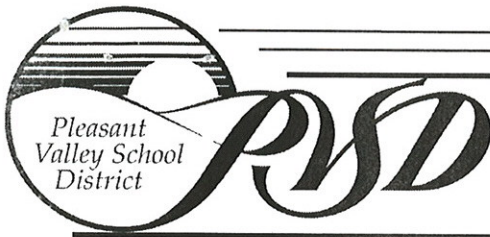
Response: The District is implementing this recommendation. The Oxnard School District will continue to have middle school staff members attend workshops on tolerance, character building and anti-bullying programs, and to enhance student participation in the Pride Program and Anti-Bullying Committees.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the *Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare* Grand Jury report. Please let us know if you require any additional information.

Sincerely,


Kathy Green, Ed.D.
Chief Academic Officer
Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services

Encl.: Minutes from August 20, 2008 Governing Board meeting



Pleasant Valley School District

600 Temple Avenue, Camarillo, CA 93010-4835

(805) 482-2763

September 29, 2008

Board of Trustees

Jennifer H. Miller
President

Suzanne Kitchens
Clerk

Sandra Berg
Member

Patty C. Lerner
Member

Ron Speakman
Member

Administration

Luis C. Villegas, Jr., Ed.D.
Superintendent

Linda Peralta
Assistant Superintendent
Educational Services

Linda Bekeny
Assistant Superintendent
Fiscal & Administrative Services

*Valuing the Past
Caring for the Present
Looking to the Future*

www.pvsd.k12.ca.us

Ventura County Grand Jury
800 S. Victoria Avenue, L#3751
Ventura, CA 93009

Dear Members of the Ventura County Grand Jury:

Enclosed please find the response to the Ventura County 2007-2008 Grand Jury report titled, Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare. The response includes:

The minutes of the September 18, 2008 Pleasant Valley School District Board of Trustees meeting. The actions taken by the Board of Trustees are highlighted to show the following:

- * The Pleasant Valley School District Board of Trustees agrees with the findings of the Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare report
- * The implementation action plan approved by the Board of Trustees at the September 18th meeting

Please contact us should you have any questions or concerns regarding the response and/or implementation plan. Our contact is Carol L. Bjordahl, Director of Student Services and Special Education Programs at (805) 445-8675.

Sincerely,

Dr. Luis Villegas
Superintendent, Pleasant Valley School District

Cc: Honorable Colleen Toy White, Presiding Judge

RECEIVED

OCT 6 - 2008

VENTURA COUNTY
GRAND JURY

Ventura County Grand Jury Recommendations And Pleasant Valley School Districts Proposed Implementation

- R-01 All school districts should comply with AB722 to maintain recommended students:counselor ratios.

Not Implemented: Currently 3 counselors are funded by general fund and 2 counselors are funded by a Supplemental Counseling Grant (7080) funding. The counselors funded by this grant are to work with students who are in the At-Risk category. The criteria for what is considered an At-Risk student is outlined in Board Policy 6179. This funding is categorical therefore not guaranteed year to year. It can be eliminated from the budget at anytime. Therefore the two counselors that are funded from this grant cannot be figured into student:counselor ratio. The district-wide ratio for the 3 general funded counselors is 768 to 1.

PVSD will form a committee of counselors, principals, and district administration in October, 2008 to address counselor staffing and prepare a recommendation to the superintendent for the 2009-2010 Staffing to be done in March, 2009.

- R-02 All Schools should have a dedicated SRO on campus during school hours.

Implemented – Currently the City of Camarillo funds a full time Deputy who is assigned as the School Resource Officer for Pleasant Valley School District. The school district finds this service invaluable. The SRO is very visible on the campuses. The SRO also participates in the assemblies regarding standards and expectations of behavior as well as extra-curricular activities.

- R-03 All permanent and temporary classrooms should have doors that lock from the inside.

Partially Implemented – Currently if a classroom lock is beyond repair, then the lock is replaced with a lock that can be locked from the inside. The Facilities Maintenance & Operations Department estimates that out of the 382 classrooms in the district approximately 20% of the portable classroom locks have been converted and 5% of the permanent classrooms have been converted.

The PVSD Facilities Maintenance & Operations Department will prepare a comprehensive plan to address converting the remainder of the classroom locks to locks that lock from the inside. This plan will be presented to the Superintendent by March 15, 2009.

- R-04 All Schools should issue unique identification badges to visitors.

Implemented – All school sites require visitors to check in at the front office as well as sign in. All schools have either Visitor stickers that must be filled out or laminated card badges on lanyards that are numbered. They are then required to wear the badge so that it is visible. As visitors leave they are required to sign out.

- R-05 All Schools should have perimeter fencing with locking gates to secure their campus.

Implemented – All schools have fencing with locking gates. During school hours all gates are locked and visitors can only enter through the office. In some cases the fencing is attached to a building. Doors to the outside from those buildings are locked at all times.

- R-06 All Schools should continue/enhance anti-bullying and tolerance programs.

Implemented – Anti-bullying and tolerance programs are constantly a focus at all of the Pleasant Valley School District Schools. In addition to playground bullying, there are several activities that middle schools implement to promote anti-bullying and tolerance:

- *Presentations to students and parents on cyber-bullying done by the school resource officer.*
- *Beginning of the year assemblies where the standard of NO BULLYING is laid out.*
- *Options of how to seek help if they or a friend are being bullied which include:*
 - Open Door policy to counselor office*
 - Incident report forms that can be filled out anonymously*
 - Access to the SRO during nutrition or lunch*
- *Character Education programs implemented to focus on appropriate behavior by utilizing a character trait of the month, a column in the monthly newsletter focusing on a character, etc.*
- *Peer Mediation is available to students who are seeking help in mediating a bullying or harassment problem.*
- *An assembly by CamFell is paid for by site PTAs or ASBs that focuses on tolerance and diversity.*
- *All staff has undergone sexual harassment and tolerance training*
- *Student agenda books have inserts that define cyber bullying and tolerance and how to handle.*
- *Start of the year student orientations address the definition of bullying and how to handle if a student feels bullied.*
- *Schools sponsor a "Mix It Up" Day where students are giving stickers and encouraged to greet someone they don't know on campus and exchange stickers and conversation.*
- *Ability Awareness assemblies are held where students get hands on experience on what it is like to be a person with different disabilities.*
- *Ventura County Health Department does a presentation to 8th grade student on Teen Dating Violence. 6th Graders are presented with Internet Predator awareness.*
- *Counselors do in class presentations on bullying so it is a smaller, more intimate environment to support open discussion.*



Excerpt from unapproved September 18, 2008 minutes
Regular Board Meeting

6. Grand Jury Report On Middle School Safety (1)

Dr. Villegas indicated the district was very closely aligned with the recommendations. Carol Bjordahl indicated that the report was not done in response to the EO Green incident. She said that the Grand Jury Report was sent to principals in June to review. After school started, they met again to discuss the six recommendations. She indicated that four of the six were already implemented; one is partially implemented; and one is not. The partially completed recommendation deals with the door locks. The Maintenance Department already has a replacement program in place as the locks become beyond repair. They are looking for guidance in the costs associated with replacing door locks. The area not considered implemented is the ratio of counselors. Currently the ratio is compliant, but some are funded from categorical money. If the categorical money is no longer provided by the state, the district would be out of compliance unless general fund money is used.

Mrs. Bjordahl indicated that she was thrilled with the free-flowing ideas and list of things already going on to prevent bullying and promote tolerance and diversity.

1. To accept and agree with the findings presented in the 2007-2008 Ventura Grand Jury Report "Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare."
2. To approve the Pleasant Valley School District Implementation Plan for the Recommendations from the 2007-2008 Ventura Grand Jury Report "Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare."

Motion made by: Suzanne Kitchens

Seconded by: Sandra Berg

Votes

Unanimously Approved



Rio

School District

Embracing hearts, inspiring minds

Board of Education

Brian Martin
President

Ron Mosqueda
Clerk

Robert Guillen

Tim Blaylock

Simon Ayala

November 7, 2008

Mr. Ronald J. Zerone, Foreman
Ventura County Grand Jury 2008-09
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

Superintendent

Sherianne Cotterell

Dear Mr. Zerone,

Re: Middle School Safety

Rio School District is responding to your request for information.

Enclosed please find the report that was approved by the Rio School District at its meeting on November 6, 2008. A copy of the minutes from the November 6, 2008 meeting will be sent to you under separate cover following their approval by the Board of Trustees at the next regularly scheduled school Board meeting on December 11, 2008.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,

Mark A. Krueger
Assistant Superintendent Business Services

cc. Sherianne Cotterell

Honorable Colleen Toy White, Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California, Ventura County
Hall of Justice, #2120
800 S. Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

RECEIVED

NOV 14 2008

VENTURA COUNTY
GRAND JURY

**RIO SCHOOL DISTRICT
AGENDA DOCKET FORM**

Agenda Item: _____
Meeting Date: November 6, 2008

Subject: Response to Grand Jury Report, "Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare"

Department: Business Services and Human Resources

Action required: Information/Action

Summary:

Rio School District, along with other Ventura County school districts, was asked to respond to recommendations made in the Ventura County 2007-2008 Grand Jury report titled, "Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare." With Board approval, the attached document, which includes the school district's response to the Grand Jury's recommendations, will be forwarded to the Ventura County Grand Jury.

Recommendation: Approval.

Fiscal Impact: (Total amount of item): Cost of installing inside-locking handsets at Rio del Valle Middle School and Vista Middle School.

Funding Source (What item is funded from): Funding for the inside-locking handsets at RdV will be requested from the State's Emergency Repair Program (ERP). A request to fund the handsets at Vista will be submitted to Riverpark, LLC. RdV qualifies for State ERP funding; Vista does not.

Department Head	Assistant Superintendent	Superintendent
-----------------	--------------------------	----------------

Attachment: Rio School District Response to Grand Jury Report

Rio School District's Response to 2007-08 Grand Jury Report "Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare"

Rio School District owns and operates two middle schools, Rio del Valle and Rio Vista.

R-01	<p>All schools should comply with AB722 to maintain recommended students:counselor ratios (C-09, C-10)</p> <p>Response: Based on June 10, 2008 enrollment, the District maintains the recommended AB722 counselor to student ratio at its middle schools. The District employs two full time counselors at its middle schools and receives support through contract counseling services to maintain a 461:1 counselor to student ratio.</p>
R-02	<p>All schools should have a dedicated SRO on campus during school hours (C-11)</p> <p>Response: Rio School District has a contract with the Ventura County Sheriff's Department to provide a uniformed School Resource Officer at both middle schools. The officer splits time between the two schools.</p>
R-03	<p>All permanent and temporary classrooms should have doors that lock from the inside. (C-05)</p> <p>Response: Currently, neither middle school has classroom doors that can be locked from the inside. Because Rio del Valle qualifies for the program, funding for this upgrade will be requested from the State Emergency Repair Program. Funding for inside-locking handsets at Vista Middle School will be considered in future budgets.</p>
R-04	<p>All schools should issue unique identification badges to visitors. (C-08)</p> <p>Response: The middle schools have a sign-in sheet and unique Rio School District visitor badges. Employees are issued unique employee photo identification Rio School District badges.</p>
R-05	<p>All schools should have perimeter fencing with locking gates to secure their campus. (C-04)</p> <p>Response: Both middle schools have perimeter fencing with locking gates to secure their campuses.</p>
R-06	<p>All schools should continue/enhance anti-bullying and tolerance programs (C-12_</p> <p>Response: All administrators and teachers have received training on anti-bullying and anti-bias training. We have adopted the theme No Place for Hate and received training on the topic by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). Administrators have a plan in place to ensure all adults connect with students and that they maintain an acute awareness of</p>

	<p>issues pertaining to bullying. Administrators will continue this program by introducing students to this topic and providing training to students in cooperation with the District's Office of Student and Family Services. The District sponsored a No Place for Hate summit which included all community stakeholders. The purpose of the Summit was to unite the community to become aware of the 40 developmental assets that help influence the choices young people make and help them to become caring and responsible adults (Search Institute).</p>
--	---

**DIRECTOR
SECONDARY EDUCATION**
William H. Waxman



BOARD OF EDUCATION

*Rob Collins
Jeanne Davis
Janice DiFatta
Eric Lundstrom
Debbie Sandland*

January 22, 2009

Ronald J. Zenone, Foreman
Ventura County 2008-2009 Grand Jury
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

Dear Mr. Zenone:

Please find with this letter our Agenda item from our January 20 Board of Education meeting. This Board of Education approved response is to items R-01 through R-06 as they pertain to the Grand Jury Final Report: Middle School Safety and Welfare.

The minutes that support the approval of this item will be available after the February 17 Board of Education meeting. I will forward those minutes to you as soon as they are available.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Waxman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Bill Waxman, Director
Secondary Education

**TITLE: APPROVAL OF THE RESPONSE TO THE VENTURA COUNTY
MIDDLE SCHOOLS SAFETY AND WELFARE FINAL REPORT
RECOMMENDATIONS**

Educational Services
Consent #4

January 20, 2009
Page 1 of 1

Prepared by: Bill Waxman, Director of Secondary Education

Background Information

In June, the Ventura County Grand Jury issued a report titled, *Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare*. This report was provided to each district along with a set of recommendations. Per Penal Code 933.05 9 (a) through (c), the district has 90 days within which to respond to the recommendations. There are a set of 6 recommendations (R-01 through R-06). It is further required that the district submit with its response to the recommendations the minutes of the meeting at which the responses were approved by the Board of Education.

Educational Analysis

The district maintains middle school sites that are safe and secure. Every effort is made to ensure that district middle schools are prepared and able to respond to emergency situations. Safety plans are updated annually. Schools meet the requirements to review, implement, and drill emergency procedures.

Fiscal Analysis

There are no fiscal requirements.

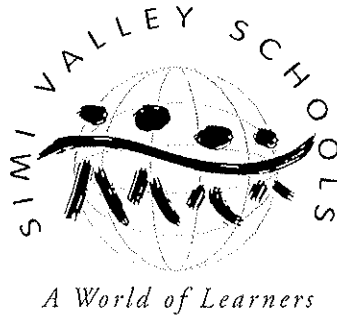
Recommendation

It is recommended that the responses to the Ventura County Grand Jury Survey final report recommendations be approved.

On the motion of Trustee *Davis*, seconded by Trustee *Pi-Fatta*,
and carried by a vote of *5/0*, the Board of Education Approved the Ventura County Grand
Jury Survey response.



**DIRECTOR
SECONDARY EDUCATION**
William H. Waxman



BOARD OF EDUCATION
*Rob Collins
Jeanne Davis
Janice DiFatta
Eric Lundstrom
Debbie Sandland*

December 5, 2008

Ronald J. Zenone, Foreman
Ventura County 2008-2009 Grand Jury
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

Dear Mr. Zenone:

In response to our meeting of December 4, 2008, I am providing you with the Simi Valley Unified School District's responses to recommendations R-01 through R-06 per the Ventura County 2007-2008 Grand Jury Final Report: Middle Schools Safety and Welfare.

R-01. All school districts should comply with AB722 to maintain recommended students:counselor ratios (C-09, C-10)

Not implemented: The district employs 24 counselors to serve the middle and high school populations. Counselor hires is predicated upon categorical funding which is allocated on a year-to-year basis. Counselor ratios at the middle schools range from approximately 450 to 470 to one; counselor ratios at the comprehensive high schools are approximately 460 to one. Current state budgetary crisis does not allow for additional counseling personnel.

R-02. All Schools should have a dedicated SRO on campus during school hours.

Not implemented: The Simi Valley Police Department provides the funding and manpower for SRO's. Each comprehensive high school has an SRO who provides service to that school and assists with schools in that geographic area. Additional officers service the middle schools both as DARE officers and for any incidences where their presence is deemed necessary by the school administration.

R-03. All permanent and temporary classrooms should have doors that lock from the inside

Partially implemented: Door locks have been replaced as a part of the modernization process. Work to install inside door locks will proceed according to the modernization schedule.

R-04. All schools should issue unique identification badges to visitors.

Implemented – All schools sites require visitors to check in at the front office as well as sign in. This requirement is posted at each school site. All schools provide visitors with identification badges that must be worn so as to be visible. Visitors are likewise required to sign out.

R-05. All Schools should have perimeter fencing with locking gates to secure their campus.

Partially implemented. The comprehensive high schools are completely fenced and secured. Two middle schools are fenced around the perimeter of the campus. The front entrance of these two schools are not fenced. This is also the case with the magnet high school which sits on the site of a former middle school. One middle school is completely fenced. The continuation high school is partially fenced.

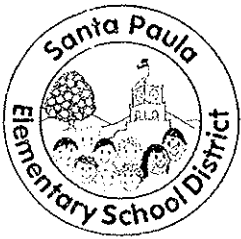
R-06. All schools should continue/enhance anti bullying and tolerance programs.

Implemented – all middle schools have implemented the Second Step Program. All high schools have implemented the Safe School Ambassadors program, including the continuation school. Both programs promote anti-bullying and tolerance. Additional program support includes, but is not limited to:

- Start-of-the-year assemblies which include addressing zero tolerance for bullying;
- Access to SRO's during the school day;
- Options for seeking out help if bullying occurs, including:
 1. Immediate access to counselors
 2. Immediate access to Assistant Principals
 3. Anonymous reporting opportunities
- School level support organizations, such as Peer Mediation, WEB (Where Everyone Belongs)

Sincerely,

Bill Waxman, Director
Secondary Education



SANTA PAULA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Educational Support Center
201 South Steckel Drive, Santa Paula, CA 93060
Phone: (805) 933-8800 • Fax: (805) 525-0546

Office of the Superintendent/Chief Executive Officer

December 2, 2008

County of Ventura Grand Jury
Attn: Joe Garza, Foreman Pro-Tem
800 South Victoria Avenue, L#3751
Ventura, CA 93009

Dear Mr. Garza:

As per your request, below are our district's responses to the recommendations enclosed in the 2007-2008 Ventura County Grand Jury Report, "Ventura County Middle School Safety":

- R-01 All school districts should comply with AB722 to maintain recommended students: counselor ratios.
The recommendation has been implemented by the Santa Paula Elementary School District. Isbell Middle School has 3 permanent counselors which comply with the 461:1 established ratio.
- R-02 All Schools should have a dedicated SRO on campus during school hours.
The recommendation has been implemented by the Santa Paula Elementary School District. The District has established a Memorandum of Understanding with the Santa Paula Police Department and is currently filling the vacancy for a School Resource Officer.
- R-03 All permanent and temporary classrooms should have doors that lock from the inside.
The recommendation has been implemented by the Santa Paula Elementary School District. This task is underway and should be completed by January 2009.
- R-04 All Schools should issue unique identification badges to visitors.
The recommendation has been implemented by the Santa Paula Elementary School District. All visitors must check-in to the main office and receive a visitor's badge after they are appropriately identified.
- R-05 All Schools should have perimeter fencing with locking gates to secure their campus.
The recommendation has been implemented by the Santa Paula Elementary School District. All campuses are fenced in with one main entry gate.

RECEIVED
DEC - 9 2008
VENTURA COUNTY
GRAND JURY

R-06 All Schools should continue/enhance anti-bullying and tolerance programs. The recommendation has been implemented by the Santa Paula Elementary School District. All our 6th grade students are taught 15 lessons of the Peacemakers Curriculum Anti-Bullying Program. For the 2008-2009, a school-wide violence prevention, anti-bullying program, Peace Builders, will be implemented and is scheduled to begin for January, 2009.

We hope this information will assist you in your information gathering. If you should have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Respectfully,

Winston A. Braham
Superintendent

WB:mh

c: Honorable Colleen Toy White, Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California, Ventura County

VENTURA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Education Service Center

September 9, 2008



255 W. Stanley Avenue
Suite 100
Ventura, California 93001-1348
(805) 641-5000 x1013
FAX (805) 653-7855

THE POINSETTIA CITY BY THE SEA

Trudy Tuttle Arriaga, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Ventura County Grand Jury
Don Cody, Ed.D., Foreman
2007-2008 Grand Jury
800 S. Victoria Avenue, L#3751
Ventura, CA 93009

**Re: Response to Ventura County 2007-2008
Grand Jury Report entitled "Ventura County
Middle School Safety and Welfare"**

Dear Dr. Cody:

The goal of all Ventura Unified School District schools and employees is to have "Safe, Healthy, and High-Performing Schools." Safety of students and staff is one of the most important aspects of a successful school district. Safe schools in our District do not mean higher fences and metal detectors. Safe schools in our District means connectedness and belonging. Safe schools ensure that every child is validated, respected and acknowledged. Connectedness with every student requires knowing their stories, noticing their absence and acknowledging their presence.

Pursuant to Penal Code §933 et seq. and the Grand Jury's request for responses to Recommendations 1 thru 6, here are Ventura Unified School District's ("District") responses to the recommendations stated in the above-referenced report.

R-01. All school districts should comply with AB722 to maintain recommended student:counselor ratios. (C-09, C-10)

The District agrees with this recommendation. The District is already in compliance with AB722.

R-02. All Schools should have a dedicated SRO on campus during school hours. (C-11)

The District partially agrees with this recommendation. The District has had up to four (4) SROs in the past funded by various grants. When the grants ended, the District was unable to continue to have SROs on campus. However, the District and the Ventura Police Department have recently negotiated for the 2008-2009 school year a cost sharing agreement whereby our middle schools (Anacapa, Balboa, Cabrillo and De Anza) and our smaller high and alternative schools (Foothill, Pacific and Community Day School) have one SRO available with two full-time SROs at our two comprehensive high schools (Buena and Ventura) for a total of three full-time SROs. While your recommendation states that all schools should have a dedicated SRO, fiscal barriers exist and the District believes the current allocation of our limited SRO resources is appropriate.

RECEIVED

SEP 16 2008

VENTURA COUNTY
GRAND JURY

R-03. All permanent and temporary classrooms should have doors that lock from the inside. (C-05)

The District agrees with the recommendation. The District's middle school permanent and temporary classroom doors already lock from the inside.

R-04. All Schools should issue unique identification badges to visitors. (C-08)

The District agrees with the recommendation. The District's middle school already use visitor identification badges.

R-05. All Schools should have perimeter fencing with locking gates to secure their campus. (C-04)

The District disagrees with this recommendation. Fencing does not prevent incidents from occurring. Recommending that perimeter fencing be installed at all schools is not the solution. If determined individuals want to do harm on a campus, most security measures, short of turning the school into a prison, will not prevent such harm.

That is not to say that perimeter fencing is not a good idea. At some schools fencing makes sense. At other schools fencing does not. Fencing decisions at individual schools should be made based upon the specific circumstances existing at those particular schools. The District has engaged in this individualized thinking and fences major portions of many campuses based on such analysis. Lastly, requiring all schools to have perimeter fencing is fiscally infeasible.

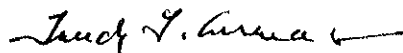
R-06. All Schools should continue/enhance anti-bullying and tolerance programs. (C-12)

The District agrees with this recommendation. All District middle schools already have anti-bullying and/or tolerance programs in place.

Should you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at the above-referenced contact information.

Very truly yours,

Ventura Unified School District



Trudy Tuttle Arriaga, Ed.D.
Superintendent

VENTURA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Superintendent's Office
255 W. Stanley Ave. Suite 100
Ventura, CA 93001

EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION:

Action Item

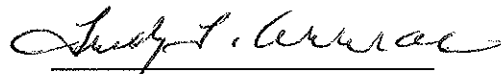
It was moved by Board member Velma Lomax, seconded by Board member Debbie Golden and carried unanimously that the Board approve agenda item 4 on page E-1 as presented.

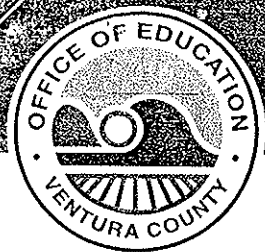
4. Response to Ventura County 2007-08 Grand Jury Report Entitled "Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare"

The Grand Jury conducted a survey of Ventura County Middle Schools. The survey ("How Prepared is Your School?") gathered information regarding various aspects of safety issues at the different middle schools in the county. The information from the survey was summarized in the above-referenced report. Pursuant to Penal Code §933 et seq., the Governing Board is required to respond to the report. In this particular instance the Grand Jury requested that the District address the recommendations of the report.

I certify that the above excerpt is a true copy from the minutes of the meeting of the Board of Education of the Ventura Unified School District dated **September 9, 2008**.

Dated: September 10, 2008


Trudy Tuttle Arriaga, Ed.D.
Superintendent



Administration

5189 Verdugo Way
Camarillo, CA 93012
805-383-1902 • FAX: 805-383-1908
www.vcoe.org

VENTURA COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Charles Weis, Ph.D., County Superintendent of Schools

July 14, 2008

Don Cody, Ed.D.
Foreman
Ventura County 2007-2008 Grand Jury
800 South Victoria Avenue, L#3751
Ventura, CA 93009

Dear Dr. Cody,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and respond to the 2007-2008 Grand Jury Report: *Ventura County Middle Schools Safety and Welfare*. I found the report to be comprehensive and enlightening. In all Ventura County schools the goal is to ensure a safe and orderly environment conducive to learning. I can assure you that your report is being taken seriously and that every effort will be made to fulfill the recommendations.

Attached for your information is the response from the Ventura County Office of Education. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Cary Dritz, Ed.D.
Associate Superintendent, Student Services

RECEIVED

JUL 18 2008

VENTURA COUNTY
GRAND JURY

**Response by the Ventura County Office of Education
(VCOE) to the
Ventura County 2007-2008 Grand Jury Report**

***Safety and Welfare in Ventura County Middle
Schools***

Creating and maintaining safe learning environments is a priority for every school. While schools remain among the safest places for our students, one incident of violence or disruption of learning is one too many! The Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE) is committed to promoting safe and healthy learning environments where students are secure in their pursuit of educational success. The effectiveness of any response to a crisis is strongly linked to the extent and appropriateness of the planning and preparation process. Therefore, each school program under the supervision of VCOE has developed a comprehensive safety plan (*Education Code* Section 32280-32288) to deal with all safety concerns and emergencies. The review of these plans annually and regular practice drills supports the critical foundation of VCOE schools preparedness.

VCOE operates school programs for a highly specialized student population. VCOE operates middle school programs for Court and Community School students and Special Education students with moderate to profound disabilities, students with emotional disturbances, and students with autism. The following are program locations where VCOE middle schools are operated:

Court and Community Schools

Providence – This is the juvenile justice center school program for incarcerated youth. There are seven (7) middle school students in Providence. Being a locked residential facility, Providence meets all the recommendations proposed by the Grand Jury.

Gateway – This is the community school for at risk juvenile delinquents who have been expelled or removed from their school of residence. There are 17 middle school students in Gateway.

Special Education Schools

Phoenix – This school is for students with emotional disturbances. There are two program sites for middle school students. Two classrooms are located at Phoenix-Camarillo and one class is located at Phoenix-Moorpark. There are 24 students enrolled in the three classrooms.

Triton - This school is for students with autism and has two classrooms for middle school students.

Dwire – This school program is for students with moderate to profound disabilities.

VCOE operates other middle school classes in districts on regular middle school campuses. These programs are guests of district middle school campuses and subject to that schools safety requirements.

The following is a description of an assessment of VCOE program compliance with the Grand Jury's recommendations:

R-01 All School districts should comply with AB 722 to maintain recommended student:counselor ratios.

Providence – Providence has one counselor that serves approximately 200 middle and high school students.

Gateway – Gateway has one counselor that services approximately 200 middle and high school students.

Phoenix – All special education students in the Phoenix program receive ongoing therapy and counseling services on a daily basis. These students receive mental health services provided by licensed clinicians employed by Ventura County Behavioral Health. The services are provided as a result of the implementation of Assembly Bill 2726, Chapter 26.5. The current ratio of services to students by the therapist/counselor is one therapist/counselor per eight middle school students.

Triton – Although Triton does not have a counselor, a behavior specialist, school psychologist, and speech and language specialist provide 4 times per week counseling/social skills sessions for the students.

Dwire – Although Dwire does not have a counselor, a psychologist, nurse, behavior specialist and other support staff are available to address all counseling related issues and concerns.

R-02 All Schools should have a dedicated SRO on campus during school hours.

Gateway – Gateway does not have an SRO, but two probation officers are assigned to Gateway and all students at Gateway are either on formal or informal probation.

Phoenix – The Phoenix program does not have a dedicated SRO on campus during school hours. However, there is a specialized support staff that includes time-in counselors to maintain control of school and support positive student behavior.

Triton – Triton does not have an SRO. The behavioral-health needs of the students are handled by the behavior specialist, psychologist, other school staff and the principal.

Dwire – Dwire does not have an SRO. The behavioral-health needs of the students are handled by the behavior specialist, psychologist, other school staff and the principal.

Special education classrooms are maintained with a maximum of eight students per room. All VCOE special education personnel are trained on an annual basis in non-violent crisis intervention strategies.

R-03 All permanent and temporary classrooms should have doors that lock from the inside.

Gateway – Gateway does not have classroom doors that can be locked from the inside.

Phoenix – One half of all doors leading into the middle school classrooms lock from the inside.

Triton – Triton does not have classroom doors that can be locked from the inside.

Dwire – Dwire does not have classroom doors that can be locked from the inside.

R-04 All Schools should issue unique identification badges to visitors.

All VCOE schools operating middle school programs require identification badges for all visitors. All visitors must sign in at the main office and show necessary identification as requested.

R-05 All Schools should have perimeter fencing with locking gates to secure their campus.

All VCOE school campuses have perimeter fencing with locking gates. Additionally, Phoenix, Triton, Providence and Gateway have only point of entrance that requires everyone entering the campus to pass through. At Providence, Gateway and Phoenix this entrance point will have walk-through metal detectors beginning in September 2008.

R-06 All Schools should continue/enhance anti-bullying and tolerance programs.

All VCOE schools have anti-bullying and tolerance programs as part of the curriculum. At Phoenix, Providence, Triton and Gateway the English-Language Arts program is called Character-Based Literacy and reinforces positive character development.