



Pleasant Valley School District

Office of the Superintendent

600 Temple Ave. Camarillo, CA 93010

Phone: (805) 445-8601 FAX: (805) 987-5511

www.pvsd.k12.ca.us

Superintendent

Response to Grand Jury Report Form

Report Title: School Bus Safety

Report Date: June 3, 2011

Response by: Luis C. Villegas, Jr., Ed.D.

Title: Superintendent of Pleasant Valley School District

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GRAND JURY

FINDINGS

- I (we) agree with the findings numbered: FI-07 (see statement attached)
- I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: FI-03, FI-04, FI-05 (see statement attached)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendation numbered R-01, R-02, R-03, R-04 will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable. (see statement attached)

Date: August 31, 2011

Signed: _____

Number of pages attached: 43



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Response to Grand Jury Report

Statements to Findings and Recommendations School Bus Safety

August 18, 2011

Pleasant Valley School District

600 Temple Ave.

Camarillo, CA 93010

FINDINGS WITH WHICH WE AGREE:

FI-07 The Grand Jury was unable to identify any single local agency responsible for collecting, collating, and reporting County school bus safety information on a countywide basis.

The Pleasant Valley School District (PVSD) agrees that there is not one agency mandated to collect, collate and report school bus safety information on a countywide basis if the information being identified by the Grand Jury attempts to directly link student ridership with school bus accidents. The California Highway Patrol (CHP) is required to investigate school bus accidents. The CHP Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System includes school bus involved collision data on a countywide basis, but does not identify individual information for each district or jurisdiction in the County. The California Highway Patrol database could be expanded with a field to include the school district or jurisdiction associated with the bus. This minor change to an existing data collection system would provide the public with specific information relating to a single jurisdiction. Public K-12 school districts in California are required to submit basic transportation program information to the California Department of Education on the "Form TRANS" each year along with the districts unaudited financial information. This public information includes the average number of students transported daily and total miles driven to/from school. School districts are not required to report accident information. The CHP Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System, combined with the currently available data from the "Form TRANS", would then allow any interested party to obtain more specific information on the operation of a public school transportation program.

FINDINGS WITH WHICH WE DISAGREE:

FI-03 Not all districts maintain information on school bus safety statistics. Some districts do not track this information at all, while others rely on their contracted bus companies to do so.

The Pleasant Valley School District (PVSD) maintains records in accordance with established law. Therefore, we disagree with this statement because of its implications that school districts do not maintain records in accordance with established law. PVSD is required to maintain and report specific information related to our student transportation program on the "Form TRANS." That form is submitted annually to the California Department of Education and is available to the public. However, PVSD is not required to maintain and report specific statistics related to school bus accidents. That requirement resides with the California Highway Patrol.

FI-04 Due to the lack of comparable, consistent school bus safety statistics provided by the districts, it is not possible to determine objective measures of school bus safety, such as accident rates. Thus, it is difficult to conclude that school bus transportation in the County is safe, as previously demonstrated at the national level. It is only possible to infer that school bus transportation in the County is safe from the information provided by the districts.

We disagree with this statement because PVSD is required by California law to submit annual transportation information to the California Department of Education on the "Form TRANS." The California Highway Patrol is required to investigate school bus accidents and has a database capable of tracking the accidents by county. Both sets of data are available to the public and could be used to make an educated conclusion of the number of accidents per mile driven or per student served.

FI-05 School bus safety statistics, for districts or for individual schools, are not readily available to the public.

We disagree with this statement. We believe that the public has access to and can obtain all the school bus accident and transportation program information that the CHP and PVSD are mandated to collect and report.

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED.

R-01 The VCOE should assume responsibility for the collection, collating, and reporting of County school bus safety information.

The California Highway Patrol is required to investigate all school bus accidents in the State of California. The CHP database reports those accidents by County. We do not believe that establishing another database, for which reporting would not be mandated by law, would provide the public with better information regarding school bus safety. Absent a mandatory statute by the state or the Ventura County Office of Education, PVSD does not plan to implement this recommendation at this time.

R-02 The VCOE should develop a standard form for the annual collection of school bus safety information from the districts. This information should include: the total number of students who ride the bus to and from school on a daily basis; the total number of students who are transported for field trips, special events, or athletic events; total miles ridden by students; and total number of school bus-related accidents and injuries resulting from those accidents.

PVSD is not required to report this type of statistical information to the Ventura County Office of Education. It is not reasonable to place redundant data collection requirements on PVSD. As a result, PVSD does not plan to implement this recommendation at this time.

R-03 The Districts should use the VCOE standard form recommended in R-02, above, to collect school bus safety information, report this information to the VCOE, and post it on district websites.

Based on the reasons identified in R-01, R-02 and R-044, the Pleasant Valley School District does not plan to implement this recommendation at this time.

R-04 The VCOE should use the forms provided by the districts to collate school bus safety information for the County and post it on its website.

Currently, there is no specific authority mandating a data collection process by the Ventura County Office of Education. Therefore, PVSD does not plan to implement this recommendation at this time.