



COUNTY *of* VENTURA

Grand Jury

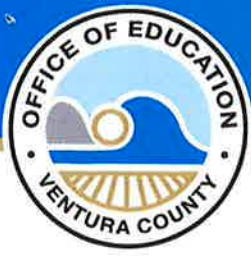
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This response was given using the 2020-2021 Ventura County Grand Jury Report form. The form should have reflected the Ventura County Grand Jury Report form 2021-2022.

We regret any confusion this may cause.

Sincerely,

Keith Frost
Foreperson
Ventura County Grand Jury (2022-2023)



VENTURA COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Dr. César Morales, County Superintendent of Schools

August 4, 2022

RECEIVED

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Ventura County Grand Jury
Attention: The Honorable Bruce A. Young, Presiding Judge
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

Ventura County
Grand Jury

To the Honorable Bruce A. Young,

The following is a response to the June 8, 2022, Ventura County Grand Jury Report: "Mental Health Services and Wellness Centers in Ventura County Schools." I agree with the Ventura County Grand Jury on the value of available mental health supports for our students in Ventura County. I am also very proud of the positive partnership between the Ventura County Office of Education, local school districts and Ventura County Behavior Health. Through strong collaboration, we collectively have not only promoted awareness of mental health programs but are building momentum on the development of Wellness Centers in schools across the county.

It is important to note that while the Ventura County Office of Education promotes mental health programs and supports the expansion of Wellness Centers, individual school district governing boards must take action to implement any program as VCOE does not have jurisdiction over any school district.

The following is a response to the Grand Jury recommendations:

- R-01. The Grand Jury recommends that by June 30, 2024, VCBH in collaboration with VCOE, expand the Wellness Center pilot program into all Ventura County public high schools. (F-01, F-02, F-03, F-04, F-05, F-06, F-09)
 - This recommendation has not yet been implemented but is in progress. We are working toward the goal to be completed by June 30, 2024.
 - The Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE) has made great strides toward meeting this recommendation. Currently, VCOE supports eight Wellness Centers with the following districts: Fillmore Unified School District, Moorpark Unified School District, Oxnard Union High School District, Santa Paula Unified School District, and Ventura Unified School District; and two more Wellness Centers with Ventura Unified School District in the planning stages to be open by September 30, 2022.
 - As of July 1, 2022, Ventura County Behavioral Health and the Ventura County Office of Education have collaborated to expand the Wellness Center pilot program to include additional Wellness Centers in public high schools across Ventura County.
 - Future plans include leveraging State and County funding resources to expand the Wellness Center pilot program into all Ventura County public high schools.

- R-02. The Grand Jury recommends that by June 30, 2025, VCBH in collaboration with VCOE, develop a strategy to expand the Wellness Center pilot program into Ventura County public middle schools. (F-01, F-02, F-03, F-04, F-05, F-06, F-12)
 - Ventura County Behavioral Health and the Ventura County Office of Education have demonstrated this recommendation by taking steps to fund and implement 10 middle school Wellness Centers with the following districts: Conejo Valley Unified School District, Fillmore Unified School District, Ojai Unified School District, Oxnard School District, Pleasant Valley School District, and VCOE – Gateway Community School. Additional plans and funding include expanding Wellness Centers into six more public middle schools at the following districts: Hueneme School District, Rio School District, and Santa Paula Unified School District by July 1, 2023.

- R-03. The Grand Jury recommends that pursuant to Wellness Center continuity and expansion, VCOE, Conejo Valley Unified School District, Simi Valley Unified School District, and Ventura Unified School District seek and obtain sustainable funding from public and private sources. (F-12, F-13, F-14, F-15)
 - This recommendation has not yet been implemented. The Ventura County Office of Education continues to work towards this recommendation by supporting the efforts to seek and obtain sustainable funding for Conejo Valley Unified School District, Simi Valley Unified School District, and Ventura Unified School District.
 - The Ventura County Office of Education will explore utilizing state and county resources in addition to any local school district investments or private/non-profit partnerships.

- R-04. The Grand Jury recommends that pursuant to Wellness Center continuity and expansion, VCOE, Conejo Valley Unified School District, Simi Valley Unified School District, and Ventura Unified School District create an infrastructure to claim Medi-Cal MH MAA funds for Wellness Centers. (F-12, F-13, F-14, F-15)
 - This recommendation has not yet been implemented.
 - As of May 2022, the Ventura County Medi-Cal Managed Care Commission voted to support Gold Coast Health Plan's participation and partnership with the Ventura County Office of Education in the Student Behavioral Health Incentive Program.
 - This collaboration between Gold Coast Health Plan, Ventura County Behavioral Health, and the Ventura County Office of Education will help reach the youth in our community in new ways by utilizing schools to provide a broad range of services.

Sincerely,



Dr. César Morales
County Superintendent of Schools

CC: Ventura Grand Jury