



CYPRESS SCHOOL DISTRICT

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July 26, 2018

The Honorable Charles Margines
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

RE: 2017-2018 Orange County Grand Jury Report
Safer Schools - What Can We Do?
Response of the Cypress School District

To the Honorable Charles Margines:

In accordance with California Penal Code section 933.05, the Orange County Grand Jury has requested the Cypress School District to respond to findings and recommendations in the 2017-2018 Orange County Grand Jury report entitled: "*Safer Schools – What Can We Do?*"

FINDINGS

F. 1. School safety and security are priorities in every school district in the Orange County public school system.

Response to F.1.: The Cypress School District agrees with this finding. School safety and security are a top priority in the Cypress School District.

F.2. The implementation of security measures for schools, in many cases, is limited by funding.

Response to F.2.: The Cypress School District agrees with this finding. The extent to which our schools can implement the type and extent of security measures is often dependent on funding.

F.3. Many Orange County school campuses were constructed to reflect an "open and inviting" atmosphere but are now faced with physical and philosophical security issues that challenge this thinking.

Response to F.3.: The Cypress School District disagrees partially with this finding. Indeed, the Cypress School District strives to make our schools welcoming to students, parents, and the community. However, in the interest of student and staff safety, all our schools have exterior fencing and single point of visitor entry through the school offices.

————— *We inspire and empower . . . Every student, Every moment, for Every opportunity!* —————

Board of Trustees: Candice Kern * Sandra Lee * Donna McDougall * Brian Nakamura * Lydia Sondhi, Ph.D.
Superintendent: Anne Silavs

F.4. While every Orange County school district reported the use of a campus visitor sign-in process, there is a lack of procedural consistency among school campuses.

Response to F.4.: The Cypress School District disagrees wholly with this finding. Our schools consistently use the Raptor Visitor Management System and established district protocols for managing and documenting school visitors.

F.5.: Many districts or school campuses do not require all teachers, staff, and volunteers to wear ID badges while on campus, making identification of authorized personnel difficult for substitute teachers, student teachers, visitors, volunteers, and first responders.

Response to F.5.: The Cypress School District disagrees partially with this finding. While our visitors, volunteers, substitute teachers, and district maintenance staff are required to wear assigned ID badges when present on school campuses, our teachers, administrators, and classified support staff are not required to wear their assigned ID badges. As a result, ID badges are not consistently worn by employees regularly assigned to a single school location.

F.6.: Currently, student ID badges, which could easily distinguish students from non-students of similar age, are not required to be worn by Orange County middle and high school students.

Response to F.6.: The Cypress School District agrees with this finding; although as an elementary school district, middle and high school students do not attend our school district.

F.7. Campus personnel and volunteers, while on duty outside the classroom, have an inconsistent usage or availability of communication devices for emergency situations.

Response to F.: The Cypress School District agrees with this finding. As it pertains to our schools, not all of our site personnel have access to communication devices while on duty outside the classroom.

F.8.: There is no documentation or reporting protocol within the districts of individual security incidents, making it difficult to track, analyze, and summarize such incidents.

Response to F.8.: The Cypress School District agrees with this finding. As it pertains to our schools, there is not currently a formal reporting protocol for individual security incidents.

F.9.: While every Orange County school develops a school safety plan, few schools have used an individual school security assessment to identify deficiencies or to develop the required plan.

Response to F.9.: The Cypress School District disagrees partially with this finding. As it pertains to our schools, the Cypress School District works closely with the Cypress Police Department and the City of La Palma Police Department to annually assess school security and identify deficiencies in the event of a campus intruder. Additionally, local law enforcement representatives serve as advisors on the district's safety committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R.1.: School districts should explore all possible funding resources that may be available in order to implement desired security measures. (F.2.)

Response to R.1.: The recommendation has been implemented. School modernization in the Cypress School District was funded by a local bond measure in 2008 that enabled the district to implement a number of effective security measures at its six schools. As further needs are identified, the district explores various funding sources to implement additional security measures (for example – the Raptor Visitor Management System). Evaluating security needs and identifying available funding resources is an ongoing process.

R.2.: School districts should re-evaluate the lack of secure fencing on all school campuses and present a report to their respective boards by December 31, 2018, outlining their plans to make campuses more secure. (F.2, F.3)

Response to R.2.: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. The Cypress School District maintains exterior perimeter fencing on all of its school campuses that includes a single point of visitor entry through the main school office.

R.3.: School districts should implement procedures to ensure that all campuses maintain a complete, daily log (electronic or manual) of every visitor and volunteer entering and exiting the campus, excluding program events such as awards ceremonies or stage or musical productions. (F.4.)

Response to R.3.: This recommendation has been implemented. The Cypress School District consistently uses the Raptor Visitor Management System at its six schools to maintain complete electronic records of every visitor and volunteer entering and exiting the campus, excluding program events such as awards ceremonies or stage/musical productions.

R.4.: School districts should implement procedures to ensure that photo identification is required of all campus visitors and volunteers before a visitor's badge is issued. (F.4, F.5.)

Response to R.4.: This recommendation has been implemented. The Cypress School District consistently uses the Raptor Visitor Management System at its six schools. The system requires all campus visitors and volunteers to present photo identification before a visitor badge is issued.

R.5.: School districts should implement procedures to ensure that all faculty and staff are required to wear visible photo ID badges while on campus. (F.5.)

Response to R.5.: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented by September 30, 2018.

R.6.: All school districts with middle or high school campuses should consider using student ID cards in a format to be worn as student ID badges while on campus. (F.6.)

Response to R.6.: As an elementary school district we do not have any middle or high school students. Accordingly, the recommendation will not be implemented because it is not applicable.

R.7.: School districts should evaluate available communication devices and ensure that custodial and supervisory personnel, as well as safety resource officers, playground supervisors and coaches, have two-way radios or equivalent communication devices with them at all times, enabling instant two-way communication with the office. (F.7.)

Response to R.7.: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented by September 30, 2018.

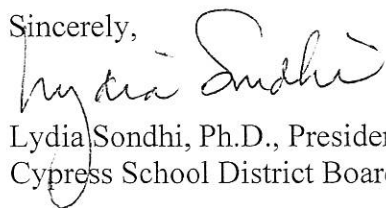
R.8.: School districts should consider requiring that all campus incidents of unauthorized access be recorded, tracked, and reported to the district office on a quarterly basis. All districts should share these reports with the Orange County Department of Education. (F.8.)

Response to R.8.: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented by September 30, 2018.

R.9.: School districts should evaluate requiring each school to perform a school security assessment to evaluate their current school safety plan. (F.9)

Response to R.9.: This recommendation has been implemented. The Cypress School District works with local law enforcement to perform an annual assessment of school security at each of its six schools.

Sincerely,



Lydia Sondhi, Ph.D., President
Cypress School District Board of Trustees

cc: Orange County Grand Jury
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701