

November 16, 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 Tustin Unified School District

To the Honorable Charles Margines:

In accordance with California Penal Code section 933.05, the Orange County Grand Jury has requested that Tustin Unified School District (TUSD) respond to findings and recommendations in the 2017- 2018 Orange County Grand Jury report entitled: "*Safer Schools – What Can We Do?*" TUSD immediately responded to each finding and recommendation in a letter dated July 27, 2018.

Tustin Unified was then told in a letter dated November 8, 2018, that our action taken with regard to R.7 "missed time frame compliance." TUSD Staff is confused by this letter and the claim that TUSD "missed time frame compliance with R.7". TUSD has been well beyond compliance in the area of emergency communication for several years. Evidence of TUSD's preparation in this area can be found in the notes from my subpoenaed interview on this topic with an OC Grand Jury representative back on October 13, 2017. TUSD has also provided an additional response to R.7 (below) that describes the timely actions TUSD has taken with regard to emergency communication.

**The following response was provided by TUSD on 7/27/18:**

**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.:** Tustin Unified School District will re-evaluate the availability of communication devices at each school site or district facility for the 2018-19 school year. TUSD will expand the availability of two-way radios where necessary to assure instant communication. TUSD will also continue to explore ways to enhance communication across the district through cell phone apps like "Titan HST."

**TUSD's Updated/Supplemental Response to R.7 as of 11/16/18:**

**Updated/Expanded Response to R.7.:** Tustin Unified School District re-evaluated the availability of communication devices at each school site and district facility prior to the start of the 2018-19 school year. Communication is a component of an evaluation (Safety Walks) conducted annually in TUSD by Student Services Staff, School Resource Officers (from TPD, IPD, and OC Sheriff), and TUSD IT/Maintenance and Operations Staff. During this annual "Safety Walk," it was once again found that all TUSD sites have radios intended for emergency communication between the sites and district office. This has been found each of the past five years in TUSD. Tustin Unified even replaced aging radios with 72 brand new emergency radios as

of February 20, 2018. Our district-wide emergency radio system has redundant antenna locations to assure

communication does not drop even if one tower is lost in an earthquake/power outage. Each school site also has supplemental, local radios that work in conjunction with the emergency radios described earlier. Local radios are provided to Campus Supervisors, School Resource Officers, Custodians, Secretaries, and some Teachers (PE) to make sure they can communicate efficiently with the office to report emergencies.

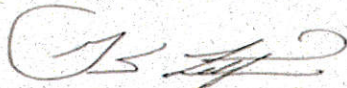
While these steps meet R.7 compliance requirements, TUSD has consistently gone well beyond simply providing radios. A few years ago, TUSD began utilizing "Titan HST," a cell phone / app-based platform available to all teachers, staff, and administration throughout the district. Titan HST allows instant communication with pre-established distribution lists across a site or district. It works on wi-fi, over LTE, and on a mesh network even if other connections are lost. Messages can be sent by opening the app and simply pressing the picture of the emergency you are experiencing. Your position is geo-located, and your scenario is well-advertised for quick action.

TUSD also runs its own, redundant, fiber-optic internet network. No other school district has this type of stability, redundancy, reliability, or overall communication ability across all classrooms and facilities. On top of this "fiber-optic backbone," TUSD employs a set of Cisco IP driven phones in every classroom and office. Our Cisco phones allow calling, paging, and even announcements over the school-wide, indoor/outdoor PA system, to quickly call lock downs or communicate directions in an emergency. All teachers, staff, administration (or students) can therefore communicate about an emergency from/to every phone on campus (and over the PA system). Some sites and positions (like IT/M&O Staff) even have mobile Cisco phones that allow instant communication from any campus.

As illustrated here, TUSD has gone well above expectation in the area of "R.7." and was compliant with the recommendations given by the OC Grand Jury. Action in this area was taken several years ago. Rather than simply meet the standard set in R.7, TUSD has continually explored additional options like our fiber internet, Cisco System integrated PA, and mesh network connectivity apps like Titan HST to make sure we are prepared to communicate in every type of emergency.

TUSD has every intention of illustrating our compliance with the OC Grand Jury's suggested actions. If this response does not help satisfy the request of the OC Grand Jury, please do not hesitate to contact TUSD for further information.

Sincerely,



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cc: Orange County Grand Jury  
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